

# **THE MIND OF THE ENTREPRENEUR: EXPLORING LIVED EXPERIENCES**

A Dissertation Submitted to the College of

Graduate Studies and Research

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

In the Department of Educational Administration

University of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon

By

Cynthia G. Baum

© Copyright Cynthia G. Baum, November 2015. All rights reserved

## **PERMISSION TO USE**

In presenting this dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a graduate degree from the University of Saskatchewan, the author agrees that the Libraries of this University may make it freely available for inspection. The author further agrees that permission for copying of this dissertation in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor who supervised this dissertation work or, in his absence, by the Head of the Department of Educational Administration or the Dean of the College of Education. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this dissertation or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to the author and to the University of Saskatchewan in any use that may be made of any materials in this dissertation.

Requests for permission to copy or to make other use of material in this dissertation, in whole or in part, should be addressed to:

### **Department Head**

Department of Educational Administration  
College of Education  
28 Campus Drive  
University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon, Canada, S7N 0X1

## **Abstract**

This research sought to examine the lived experiences and minds of entrepreneurs who had influenced society in ways beyond the domain of the private sector. An entrepreneur was defined as an individual who pursues opportunity or is driven by the perception of opportunity. It was proffered that a divide exists in our understanding of an entrepreneur—as person—and an entrepreneur—as business starter. To a great extent, this divide has limited exploration of the connections and benefits that entrepreneurial thinking might bring to education.

This was a qualitative and interpretivist study based on interviews with a purposive sample of entrepreneurs who have had a major influence in private, public, and more generally in the plural sectors in and around Canada. Nine entrepreneurs were invited to tell their life stories, to provide their perceptions of how entrepreneurs think and to relate how they believed they had developed their skills. Using in-depth interviews, the researcher was able to discover, in part, the essence of how these entrepreneurs thought, how they made decisions, and how they viewed themselves and their world.

The findings and insights add to the growing body of literature on entrepreneurship. The researcher argued that the dissertation had given light to the lived experience of entrepreneurs. Understanding how these persons had become entrepreneurial and how they had recognized opportunities for their own mentorship were addressed by the research. How these entrepreneurs thought, their motivations, and interests, as well as how they perceived their role in the world provided valuable insights, especially as one seeks to understand how to cultivate or develop, nurture and encourage entrepreneurs, and to foster entrepreneurial behaviour throughout the education sector.

The exploratory insights from these rich interviews serve to further foster fruitful conversations on potential alignments between the ways and thinking of entrepreneurs and educational systems.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge the encouragement, support and commitment of those who chose to walk this journey with me. In order to arrive at this point, I cannot over emphasize the role that Dr. Keith Walker played in this process. This research would not have existed without his encouragement to study at the University of Saskatchewan and then through his role as my advisor. Dr. Walker was the first to get excited about the possibilities of this study. He is a brilliant scholar and mentor. He has had, and will continue to have, an unimaginable impact on each of us in his care. Thank you for being willing to step outside of the constraints of the safe, then defend, encourage, and challenge me to take the path less chosen and challenge academic protocols.

At the University of Saskatchewan, I was fortunate to have teachers, professors, and colleagues who shared their knowledge, vision and friendship with me. I am profoundly grateful to my committee members, who made time to meet, read draft documents and provide scholarly feedback. I believe that together we have broken barriers, challenged stereotypes and made an impact in the thinking through a demonstration of courage, determination and leadership. Dr. Lee Swanson, thank you for your regular and instantaneous responses and for making time to read, forward articles and provide encouraging, scholarly feedback. Thank you for your clear and valuable contributions that continually challenged me to think more deeply. To Dr. Michael Cottrell, thank you for your words of support, and many re-reads and tweaking. Your intuitive intelligence guided your ability to know how to push and when to encourage me. Thank you for helping me clarify concepts and thoughts in such a patient and gracious manner. Dr. Edwin Ralph, thank you for enthusiastically guiding me through the nuances

of APA processes and challenging me toward balance, especially in setting a positive model for studies in education. Thanks to your eye for detail, my study remained scientifically germane. To Dr. Sheila Carr-Stewart, although you were unable to attend my final defense, I want to acknowledge the part you played as my initial chair and mentor. Thank you for having your office door open and for making yourself available to me throughout this process. To my external examiner, Dr. Chris Street, thank you for your feedback and for challenging me with tough questions. The final product is better thanks to the contributions of each one of you. Thank you all for your valued suggestions, expertise and openness.

I am fortunate to have forged new friendships that will last a lifetime. I owe so much to Dr. Viv Walker who provided constant mirth and peace in this whirlwind of travel and study. You not only became a cherished friend, but you made me feel like part of the family! I am forever grateful. Thank you to my fellow Ph.D. students, and especially my office mate and friend, Anne Slaboda. Our discussions and debates sharpened my mind and served to broaden my knowledge and intellectual curiosity.

I can't imagine where I would be today without some of my long-standing friends who have walked this journey with me. I want to thank my colleague, Pam Carvey for your unconditional friendship as well as your incredible technical assistance, your scientific yet emotional love of words, and your faithful comradery in all of our educational pursuits. Thank you to Lori Snoxell, for being my rock, my prayer support and friend for over thirty cherished years. You have fed my spirit, and cheered me on to remain accountable, focused and committed. To Ron and Bev Martin, our friends and neighbor, thank you for walking this journey with us. You have been cheerleaders,

encouragers and wonderful friends through this journey. And lastly, thank you for the many others who have remained faithful in praying for me and especially my mentor and prayer partner, Eleanor Fowler. When I grow up, I want to be just like you.

Family is paramount as we grow and I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the role that they have played in my life. My sister, Cheryle Ellis, thank you for being exemplary in teaching me about family, and about the resiliency of the human spirit. Thank you to my brothers, Ken and Kevin DeMaere. You have both given me many reasons to grow wiser, stronger and love more deeply. Thanks Ken for paving the way to excellence in further education. Kevin, thank you for your example of sharing and loving that doesn't have conditions. I love and cherish each one of you and the amazing people you have brought into our family (Kurt, Anna-Dawn and Rhonda). To my sister in law, and friend Linda Fester, the female version of my husband, I thank you for the gift of your love and friendship and the many lessons you and Glen have taught me through our lives.

Lastly, I want to thank the participants in this study. Thank you for taking time out of very busy schedules to share your stories, allowing me to use your names, and enthusiastically embracing this study. Your stories have not only impacted my life, but were the heart and soul of this research.

Though the list could go on and on, I just want to say that I am humbled, and profoundly grateful, to our family and friends who undergirded us with their support and prayer through these years.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation, first, to my parents, Bill and Audrey DeMaere –to dad, who passed away before this writing was completed, and to mom who keeps his memory alive. Dad was my comrade and encourager throughout my life. He believed in me and in the power of what could be done if you wanted it badly enough. Mom, you taught me the value of practice, hard work, and tenacity. You both lived perseverance and determination, and the belief that thinking differently was not a bad thing. You also taught me the value of a deep faith in God and how to truly love others.

It is with a humble sense of gratitude that I also dedicate this dissertation to my children and grandchildren. Corry, Kelly and Ryan, you have been there through all my dreams of post secondary education. Instead of resentment for shared time, you have honored me by being my biggest enthusiasts and by choosing strong, beautiful, and intelligent women (Emily, Tara and Carli) to share your life with and bring excellence to our family. To my grandchildren, Beckett, Hunter, Navy and Brock, I love you and pray that as a witness to this journey, you will catch an excitement for learning, growing and never giving up!

Finally, and most importantly, I dedicate this study to my husband, Alex. You have been my greatest cheerleader and witness to my story. You are a brilliant businessman and entrepreneurial thinker, who, even though you have accomplished so much in your own life, remain unabashedly unshaken in your belief in my ability to do whatever I set out to do. Thank you for the endless conversations, and for all you have sacrificed so I could continue to study and fulfill this dream. We have so much left to do!



## **Table of Contents**

Abstract	
CHAPTER 1: The Nature of the Problem	1
Background to the Problem	3
Purpose of This Study	10
Problem Statement	10
Research Questions	11
Significance of the Study	11
Definitions	15
Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations	16
Assumptions Associated With The Study	17
Limitations Associated With The Study	18
Delimitations Associated With The Study	19
Organization of the Dissertation	20
CHAPTER 2: A Review of Related Literature	22
Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurial and Entrepreneurship	23
A Brief History of Entrepreneurship	24
Framework One: Culture/Environment	29
Societal expectations on entrepreneurs	30
Attitudes surrounding entrepreneurs	31
Entrepreneurial opportunity	36
Summary of Framework One	40
Framework Two: Entrepreneurial Theory	40
Theory surrounding entrepreneurial opportunity	43

The emerging definition of entrepreneurship	46
Extant models of entrepreneurship	49
Perception of risk for entrepreneurs	61
Summary of Framework Two	62
Framework Three: Trends and Debates	63
Traits or personality perspectives	63
Nature versus nurture perspectives	67
The conflicting role of the entrepreneur	69
Summary of Framework Three	72
Framework Four: Entrepreneurial Process	72
The role of entrepreneurs	73
Entrepreneurial practice	74
Educating entrepreneurs	75
Developing expectations	79
Summary of Framework Four	81
Summary of The Review of Related Literature	81
CHAPTER 3: Research Design: Methodology and Approach	84
The Domain of This Research	87
The Adaptation of Narrative and Phenomenological Approaches	89
Approach to Data Collection and Analysis:	96
Selection of Participants	97
Interview Method	102
Interview questions	102

Rapport building	104
Self-identifying entrepreneurial behaviours	104
Building/learning to be entrepreneurial	104
Identifying entrepreneurial behaviours in others	105
Recording the Interviews	105
Data Collection	106
Data Analysis Steps and Procedures	110
Immersing in the Data	112
Generating Categories and Themes	112
Conversations of Themes and Meaning Checks	114
Representative Figures	115
Trustworthiness	117
Ethical Considerations	123
About the Researcher	125
Summary of the Research Design, Methodologies and Approach	126
CHAPTER 4: Lived Experiences of Entrepreneurs	128
Introducing the Entrepreneurial Participants	131
Richard Gauthier	132
Al MacPhee	135
Luc Duval	138
Anne-Frederic Duval	140
Robert Chipman	142
Gordon Rumpel	146

The Honourable Doug Horner	149
John Robinson	152
Cathy Bennett	153
Reducing the Data Using Research Questions	156
Can Entrepreneurial Thinking Be Taught?	157
Participant perceptions of role models	157
<i>Participant reflections</i>	159
Summary of participants' remembrances of role models	181
Participants' Perceptions of Personal Development: Impact of Education	181
Remembrances of the impact of teachers	184
<i>Participant reflections</i>	184
Summary of the impact of teachers	190
Perceived value of their educational experience	190
Participant reflections	191
Summary of perceived value of educational experience	200
Perception of feeling of intellectual success in school	201
<i>Participant reflections</i>	202
Summary of perceptions of feeling intellectual success in school	206
Summary of Participants' Perception of their Development:	
Impact of education	206
Participants' Perceptions of Their Own Development: Needs in Education	207
Participants' need for problem solving in learning	208
<i>Participant reflections</i>	208

Summary of participants' need for problem solving in learning	211
Participants' need for real life experiences in learning	211
<i>Participant reflections</i>	212
Summary of participants' need for real life experiences in learning	215
Summary of Participants' Perceptions of Their Own Development:	
Needs in Education	216
Summary of Can Entrepreneurial Thinking Be Taught?	216
How Do Participants Perceive Themselves In The World?	219
Participants' perceptions that they thought differently than others	222
<i>Participant reflections</i>	222
Summary of participants' perceptions that they thought differently	229
Participants' perceptions that their mind never stops	230
<i>Participant reflections.</i>	230
Summary participants' perceptions that their minds never stop	237
Participants' perceptions that they are driven to think bigger	238
<i>Participant reflections</i>	238
Summary of participants' perceptions that they are driven to think bigger	245
Participants' perceptions that they could not stop seeing opportunity	246
<i>Participant reflections</i>	246
Summary of participants' perceptions that they could not stop seeing opportunity	255
Participants' perceptions that they saw failures as opportunities	255
<i>Participant reflections</i>	256

Summary participants' perceptions that they saw failures as opportunities	265
Participants' perceptions of confidence in their own problem solving abilities	265
<i>Participant reflections</i>	266
Summary of participants' perceptions of confidence in their own problem solving abilities	273
Participants' perceptions that they are risk makers	274
<i>Participant Perceptions</i>	274
Summary of participants' perceptions that they are risk makers	280
Summary of How Participants Perceive Themselves In The World	281
Summary of the Lived Experiences of Entrepreneurs	281
CHAPTER 5: Discussion, Conclusion and Implications	284
Review of the Rationale for the Study	284
Review of Research Problem Statement and Research Questions	286
Review of Dissertation Research Methodology	287
Key Findings and Contributions From The Study	288
Key Finding 1:	290
Multiple understandings regarding who an entrepreneur is	291
Rationale for building on the definition of an entrepreneurial thinker	293
Building on the definition of an entrepreneurial thinker (ET)	296
Key Finding 2:	298
Research Question #1	299
Influence of role models	299

Influence of education	301
Discussion of Participants' Perception of Their Own Development	304
Summary of Participants' Perception of Their Own Development	307
Key Finding 3:	309
Research Question #2	309
These entrepreneurial participants thought differently	309
The mind of these entrepreneurial participants never stopped	312
Entrepreneurial participants were driven to think bigger	313
Entrepreneurial participants recognized and responded to opportunity	315
Entrepreneurial participants saw failures as learning tools	317
Entrepreneurial participants were confident in their own problem solving	318
Entrepreneurial participants were risk makers	320
Summary of entrepreneur participants' perception of themselves in society	323
Key Finding 4:	327
Research Question 3	327
Recognizing a kind of problem solving that is unique	328
Creating conditions for nurturing and development	330
Creating a place for entrepreneurial thinkers	333
Summary of Key Finding 4:	334
Implications for the Field of Education	335
Accommodating Problem Solving	336
Concluding Remarks with Respect to Implications for Education	338

Implications for Leadership: Encouraging Entrepreneurial Thinkers in Public and Plural Sector Leadership and Boards	339
Contributions to Literature and Methodology	341
Implications For Further Research	348
Summary of Findings and Contributions From This Study	349
Researcher’s Concluding Remarks: Considering the Mind of an Entrepreneur	350
References	353
Appendixes	387
Appendix A    Approved Ethics Proposal	388
Appendix B    Initial Telephone Contact Guiding Script	397
Appendix C    Letter of Interview Consent	400
Appendix D    Interview Format	402
Appendix E    Letter of Consent for release of Transcripts	406
Appendix F    Robert Chipman’s 12 Precepts	408
Appendix G    Gordon Rumpel Tribute	410
Picture Album	412



## LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 2.1.</i> Current themes in literature	23
<i>Figure 3.1.</i> Depiction of the Logic of the Dissertation Research	86
<i>Figure 3.1a.</i> Depiction of the Logic of the Methodology	88
<i>Figure 3.1b</i> Depiction of the Logic of Data Collection	106
<i>Figure 3.1c</i> Depiction of the Logic of Data Analysis	111
<i>Figure 3.2.</i> The Structure of the Interviews	103
<i>Figure 3.3.</i> Description of data analysis process	115
<i>Figure 4.1.</i> Participant's perception of entrepreneurial role models past and present	158
<i>Figure 4.2.</i> Participant's perception of formal education and their learning preferences	183
<i>Figure 4.3.</i> Participant perception of themselves in the world	221
<i>Figure 5.1.</i> Comparing definitions	297
<i>Figure 5.2.</i> The problem-solving entrepreneurial thinker	326
<i>Figure 5.3.</i> Educating the entrepreneurial thinker	333

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1. <i>Entrepreneurial Participant Overview</i>	131
Table 5.1. <i>Summary of Contribution to Knowledge-Question One</i>	344
Table 5.2. <i>Summary of Contribution to Knowledge-Question Two</i>	345
Table 5.3. <i>Summary of Contribution to Knowledge-Question Three</i>	347
Table 5.4. <i>Summary of Contribution to Theory and Methodology</i>	348

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM**

The popularity of entrepreneurship, as a means for providing market-driven advantage (e.g., Gartner, 1989), has limited our definitions and understanding of who entrepreneurs are (e.g., Mackenzie, et al., 2007; Katz, 1992; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, Bruyat & Julien, 2001; Reynolds, 1991). Society often associates entrepreneurs within the private, profit-focused sector (Brockhaus, 1982; Collins & Moore, 1970; Cooper & Dunkelberg, 1981) that can limit entrepreneurship to those who take part and or initiate activities that are “involved in organization creation” (Gartner, 1989, p.47). Johnson, Parker, and Wijbenga (2006) questioned the validity of studies that focus on business start-up and argued that less than half of start up businesses actually ever open or stay open. “Survival bias”, as they referred to it, can eliminate the important learnings that would emerge if one could look at what did not work (2006, p. 1). It is also safe to say that not everyone who is involved in creating an organization does so because it is a new, innovative or unique idea (Dees, 2001). There are those who begin a business or a practice in response to their training, as is the case with doctors, dentists, pharmacists, and in trades such as electricians and plumbers. This generic definition appears to be problematic in that it fails to consider the difference between entrepreneurs who are truly unique, innovative, creative and groundbreaking in what they begin, imagine, and build, and those who simply start a business no matter the circumstance.

Secondly, with definitions that place entrepreneurs strictly in the profit-driven private sector, attempts at engaging entrepreneurial thinkers in plural sectors can become problematic. In education, often hints of profit-centeredness casts shadows of suspicion

on current or proposed partnerships that endeavour to bring together business and education (e.g., Hentschke, 2009). The idea that an educator might be entrepreneurial is accompanied with the expectation that such a person would more likely leave teaching to begin a business with educational clientele (Leisey & Lavaroni, 2000). On the other hand, some schools have employed business entrepreneurs to help reclaim, refund and rejuvenate student and school capacity (Childress, 2010).

Social entrepreneurship occurs when entrepreneurs are able to use business principles as a way to sustain an organization, or a cause, where the primary focus of the venture is on social impact (Wolk, 2008, Swanson & Zhang, 2012). According to Swanson and Zhang (2012), social entrepreneurship exists in the intersection of the three sectors of social economy:

1. The private sector – the creation of ventures where profit generation for the owners is the focus.
2. The public sector – where services that are not covered by the private sector are funded through public and business taxes.
3. Civil or Plural (as I will refer to it) – where goods and services are not provided by other sectors. (Quarter, Mook, & Armstrong, 2009)

It is through the consideration of social entrepreneurship that Dees (2001) identified the roles of the entrepreneur as being different from a regular business owner. Others have joined in the understanding of the uniqueness of the practice of entrepreneurs (e.g., Cantillon, 1931; Kirzner, 1979; Knight, 1921; Say, 1845; Schumpeter, 1934). Wiener (1993) argued in the beginning stages of any new idea “some person or persons must have introduced it in in their own minds” (p. 7). Researchers have more recently sought

to explore the links and benefits that entrepreneurial thinking might bring to each of these sectors (e.g., Van Praag & Versloot, 2008; Hentschke, 2009). However, there appears to be a void in research with respect to potential for entrepreneurial thinking within the education context. How might the way entrepreneurs tend to think, their views of the world, their drives and role perceptions provide insights for the benefit of political and educational realms and endeavours? Assumptions about entrepreneurship and about education will need to be identified and articulated if meaningful research is to take place (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011).

To reach deeper understandings of this phenomenon (the entrepreneurial mind), I conducted purposeful conversations with selected entrepreneurs who were invited to tell their story (Clandinin & Rosiak, 2007) through their entrepreneurial mindset or orientation. Through these conversations, I extracted data with the possibilities of previously hidden realities in those experiences (Clandinin & Rosiak, 2007). These perspectives were then considered against the extant literature. These exploratory findings inform and contribute to our understanding of entrepreneurs beyond traditional business settings, as we begin to make room for richer conversations that could bridge gaps in education and translate into contributions to knowledge and literature.

### **Background to the Problem**

Our son's invitation to attend entrepreneur camp came as a surprise to us all. Possibly it was our long affiliation with Rotary, or perhaps it was the shortage of eligible grade eight students to fill the roster. Whatever the reason, he thought it would be a fun week away from home and so accepted.

On the first day, the campers were divided into teams and encouraged to think of a business that they could create during the week. A local bank agreed to take personal items as collateral for the money they would need to operate these businesses. On the final day of camp, they would sell their wares to parents and family who came to pick them up. The most profitable team would be the winner.

Arriving at the camp, we were greeted by a group who had created a parking pass system where we would now pay to park for the day. Walking along the grounds, we stopped to look, and buy, various creative nick-knacks from eager teams. I bit down on my shock as I approached my multi-sport all-star athlete son sitting behind a table, cajoling awkward hemp strings into woven bracelets and necklaces. The words, “Hi, Mom. Wanna buy a bracelet?” startled me back to a reality as I subconsciously calculated how many of these things I would need to buy for them to break even, much less win!

Throughout the afternoon, I watched these young people sell and convince welcoming buyers with an energy that was fueled by the simple wantonness of the reward. Needless to say, we were wary that our son was quite possibly in the wrong arena. At 3 o’clock, he put down his hemp and walked from his table. Quick to stay with him, I inquired as to where he was headed. His response stemmed one of my many ah-ha moments. “I am going to collect my rent” was his nonchalant but knowing response.

As it turned out, in the first hour of the first day, when the instructor explained the process, Ryan asked if he could buy the land as his investment. In doing so, everyone else would have to rent space from him in order to conduct their businesses. The instructor had never had that request before, but happily set a price and made the deal. After collecting all the personal valuables his team could offer the bank and purchasing

the land, they only had enough money to buy some hemp and a few packages of beads.

Needless to say, his team won by far. Once they paid back the bank, the extra bucks jingling in his pocket on the ride home reminded me that he thought like an entrepreneur long before this camp and beyond anything we had taught him.

Gartner (1989) argued for a definition of entrepreneurship that deemed such a person as a “creator of organizations” (p. 47). Given this orientation, the behaviour of an entrepreneur links them to the creation portion of an organization and ends when that stage is done. Entrepreneurship then, is a “role that individuals undertake to create organizations” (p. 64); a “temporal experience” which results from an interaction of “feeling and agonizing over his or her creation” (Morris, Kuratko, Schindehutte & Spivak, 2011, p. 12). Gartner’s (1989) conclusions were drawn from thirty-two studies whose only subjects were owners of businesses. One could argue it is more difficult to consider what entrepreneurship looks like outside of the business framework when each subject was chosen simply for his or her business involvement.

More recent studies questioned Gartner’s analysis of entrepreneurship with claims that research around entrepreneurship needs to revisit the idea of the person as an entrepreneur (Mackenzie, Ugbah & Smothers, 2007). Similarly, researchers have criticized Gartner’s simplified definition as narrow (Mackenzie, et al., 2007, p. 24; Katz, 1992, p. 31; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, p. 162), de-contextualized (Mackenzie, et al., 2007, p. 24; Bruyat & Julien, 2001, p. 171; Reynolds, 1991, p. 47), and that it significantly limits the further study of entrepreneurship in “the rest of the social sciences” (McKenzie et al., 2007, p. 25). In response, McKenzie, et al. offered a definition as follows: “Entrepreneurship involves individuals and groups of individuals seeking and exploiting

economic opportunity” (p. 26). In doing so, they removed the restraint of being a business owner but have further restricted the entrepreneur within the business construct of exploiting “economic opportunity.”

On the other hand, Stevenson (1983, p. 384) defined entrepreneurship as “...a process by which individuals – either on their own or inside organizations – pursue opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control.” Sarasvathy’s (2001) more recent study built on this idea of opportunity but once again looked at high performance business entrepreneurs. She demonstrated how they use their personal strengths and available resources to improvise solutions through their use of “effectual” (selecting between possible effects) versus “causal reasoning” (taking a particular effect and identifying the ways to cause that effect) (2001, p. 245). For me, a key element to this research is the idea that entrepreneurial thinking can exist outside of a business construct.

The recognizable market value of entrepreneurs has sparked interest in the study of start-up business entrepreneurship, which is arguably one of the fastest growing fields of research in the business literature over the last few decades (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006; Acs & Audretsch, 2005; McDonald et al., 2004). Statistics, as outlined by Murphy et al. (2006), show that there are over 1600 universities who offer a combined 2200 entrepreneurship courses, and employ at least 277 endowed faculty positions (Katz, 2003, p. 285). There are over 44 refereed entrepreneurship journals and more than 100 established and funded entrepreneurship centers that consult with and guide entrepreneurs and students. Driven by the idea that decision-makers have come to regard new businesses as part of the solution to unemployment and stagnation in the economy (Venkataraman, 1997; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), some argue that nurturing small



business entrepreneurs has become an exogenous solution to change (Schneider, Teske & Mintrom, 1995; Von Bergen, Freedman & Pages, 2003). The idea that we should rely on business entrepreneurs to come into our schools to fix educational issues has often marked the last century of educational change (Sandler, 2010; Chubb, 2008).

In a similar fashion, the nature of school reform over the past decade often underscores the need for a different kind of leader (e.g., Chubb, 2008). The role of the principal is becoming increasingly complex as schools face demanding issues of diversity, economic instability, emergent technologies and increased accountability on both the part of teachers and principals (Childress, 2010; Blankstein, 2010; Fullan, 2004; 2003). This is evident in the move to site-based management, (e.g., RAM) where principals are now leaders who manage an educational organization often leaving them with less opportunity for interaction with students (Leithwood & Menzies, 1998; Childress, 2010).

The increased inflow of immigrants (Immigration Canada, 2011), the growing disparity between the rich and the poor (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2010), and the integration of special needs students into the classroom (Blankstein, 2010) often forces leaders to address diversity through a lens of needed professional development and funding (Childress, 2010). Efforts to increase economic competitiveness and the links of these pursuits to a need for a strengthened education system have contributed to urgency for school reform in Western nations (Blankstein, 2010). The needs of today's global technological highway stands as a reminder that leadership support of new technologies is paramount to the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner (Hilliard & Jackson, 2011). In addition, the roles of the principal are interfaced with political decisions that may include shifts to site-based management, funding cutbacks, and issues such as growing parental rights and

competition for student attendance (Hentschke, 2009; Fullan, 1997). Principals can be expected to be learning leaders, build trust and organizational relationships, maintain a healthy and vibrant school learning culture, and do so with tightened budgets (Robbins & Alvy, 2004).

In addition to these complexities, researchers have identified barriers of risk that might further limit the willingness of principals to be innovators. Building on the work of Brown and Cornwall (2000), it is possible to identify professional and personal costs associated with a principal's decision to be entrepreneurial. These authors observed that, "there is little reward for taking entrepreneurial risks and succeeding, while there is significant personal and professional costs associated with taking such risks and failing" (p. 11). As early as 1982, Sarason observed that when principals encounter resistance to their ideas, it is common to either "assert authority or withdraw from the fray" (p. 160). Personal and professional risks can be barriers to principals who would normally seek innovative solutions within the educational system. Childress (2010) articulated a need for principals to feel supported as they seek innovative ways to serve an increasingly complex and rapidly changing society

In the business world, entrepreneurship is an irresistible force for the health and growth of the economy (Acs, 2005). More Canadians are becoming and celebrating entrepreneurs than ever before (Fisher & Reuber, 2010), yet in many schools, entrepreneurship is still considered a business concept and often distrusted (Hentschke, 2009). Because entrepreneurial research has often focused on and has been delimited to those who start up new businesses, there is a growing need for continuing research that

further develops an understanding of the entrepreneurial mind as it can and does operate outside of the profit-centered world of the private sector.

This study derived inspiration from studies on the how leaders think (e.g., Garten, 2001, *The Mind of a CEO*; Wareham, 1991, *The Anatomy of a Great Executive*; Sousa, 2003, *The Leadership Brain*; Welter & Egmon, 2006, *The Prepared Mind of a Leader*; Boyajian, 2011, *Developing the Mind of a Leader*; and Gardner, 2006, *Five Minds for the Future*; and Gardner, 2006, *Changing Minds*). This study resonates with scholarship on multiple intelligences; with new ways of thinking—in some sense it is what entrepreneurship is all about—not just legitimizing, but encouraging thinking that is creative and opportunistic, helping us to do things a different way. Jeffery Garten (2001), for example, spoke of the purpose of his study by saying:

I tried to get into these people's heads. I wanted to understand the environment they were operating, the opportunities they saw, the obstacles they faced and what worried them the most..." (p. 1)

The objective of Garten's study was:

...to reflect the most important thoughts that run through the minds of some of the world's leaders as a group. I [Garten] was looking for patterns from which to draw conclusions, patterns from what was said and what wasn't. (p. 9)

Garten interviewed "top businesspeople to see what they thought" (p. 10). My wish to gain greater insight into the mind of the entrepreneur could be simply stated that I too, wanted to know what these successful men and women thought.

I was interested in finding out from "people who have been there" – how they think, what drives them, their interests, and how they perceive their role within the private sector, but also how they saw themselves as they negotiated through public and plural sectors. Mintzberg (2014) described plural sectors as humanitarian driven

organizations that are not owned by anyone and do not fit in public or private sectors. Instead they raise money to provide needed goods and services. According to Mintzberg, this is a more inclusive name for what one may have considered not-for-profit.

### **Purpose of This Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the minds (thinking) of selected entrepreneurs, who have had an influence in arenas that would be considered to be private, public and plural sectors. Through this exploration of their lived experiences, deeper understandings of this phenomenon together with direct and indirect insights with potential implications for education systems were garnered.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem is that there has been a gap in what we know about the entrepreneurial mind that makes it hard to replicate, adapt, develop and understand entrepreneurial “ways,” especially in the context of education. Entrepreneurs are applauded for their impact in the market place, but the entrepreneurial role is less often considered applicable in the plural or public sectors. In education, little is understood about entrepreneurial nature of principals or other school leaders, though researchers and policy makers encourage successful business people to partner with schools in an attempt to procure innovative ideas that will increase school and student success. We do not know enough about how to educate or develop the entrepreneur mind, with the default that management and small business creation strategies are taught as ways to nurture entrepreneurial behaviour.

## **Research Questions**

Main research question: What is the essence of the entrepreneurial mind and what insights can be gained from perceptions of entrepreneurs that could benefit the education sectors?

The following three research questions guided the research:

1. How do these participant entrepreneurs perceive their personal development as entrepreneurs?
2. How do these participant entrepreneurs perceive themselves and how do they interact with, adapt to, and influence society?
3. From these participant entrepreneurs' perceptions and stories, what insights could be garnered with respect to how they see themselves, how they think and act entrepreneurially; and what could be learned from those with an entrepreneurial mind that might have adaptive potential for those working within educational systems?

## **Significance of the Study**

From the review of the literature, there was an apparent gap in our understanding of both entrepreneurs themselves and entrepreneurship in public and plural sectors (Acs & Audretsch, 2005). Narrowing these gaps could lead to a greater capacity to assess the usefulness of the entrepreneurial mind for applications in education, especially as it exists in these sectors. A great deal of literature details what entrepreneurs do and the impact of their business activities on our economy. I believe that there is a need to build on research that continues to provide a richer understanding of how an entrepreneur thinks, how their decisions are made, and, ultimately, how they learn and adapt to be successful in their

entrepreneurial efforts, despite presence of risks and controlled resources. According to Bygrave (2007), the majority of studies of entrepreneurs are done using phone or paper multiple-choice questionnaires, statistical analysis of “outlier” big box companies, or secondary data sources. He argued that there is a need for more qualitative studies that consider “real-life case studies of actual entrepreneurial businesses from conception to adolescence” (p. 26). This study is significant in that it gave room for these entrepreneurs to tell their story from inception, and through the struggles, lessons and dreams.

In addition, there exists only a paucity of literature that considers entrepreneurial activity in education beyond the framing of an educational business endeavor (Leisey & Lavaroni, 2000). I would argue that an understanding of entrepreneurial activity that is planted singularly in a profit-centered approach could weaken the appeal and adaptive potential of entrepreneurial mindfulness for those working within child-focused educational systems. This study is significant in that as these entrepreneurs told their stories, their remembrances brought insight into how they thought, how they saw themselves as entrepreneurs, and how their educational experience might have informed potential entrepreneurial opportunity and performance.

The significance of this study was the promise of the development of broader understandings of entrepreneurship, the entrepreneur, and most specifically entrepreneurial thinking through the telling of lived experience. Crucial to the significance of this study were the inclusion of entrepreneurs who had performed in more than one sector.

As one looks for people who are impacting this generation— do they manifest the features of entrepreneurial thinkers? What if one was to ask such leaders:

- Can you describe what is going on in your mind?
- What keeps you awake?
- What has been the most powerful influence on your life?
- What are your regrets?
- How do you deal with the self-doubt?
- Every good idea has something wrong with it - when some can only see what is wrong with it - and a person can see the potential in that situation, how do you settle that?
- What do you think at those moments when you must make an unpopular or a risky decision?
- In the context of no one actually agreeing with you but you just felt like it was exactly what you needed to do, how did you? What was going on in your head?
- So if you were to do it all over again... What would you do differently? What would you foster?

The intended significance of this study was to bring the responses for these questions to the place of description, based on interviews and a bringing together of the multiple perspectives of the participating entrepreneurs.

In addition, this study sought to help people understand entrepreneurs better and to gain insight into questions like:

- How do we encourage entrepreneurs?
- How do we nurture them?
- How do you develop this entrepreneurial mind?
- How do we build the capacity for entrepreneurship- how do we foster that?

- How did that begin for them?
- What was their experience of the phenomenon?
- In what ways were they encouraged?
- What was it, after failures that kept them moving on?
- How much of this is transferable to other people?
- How do you encourage this? Teach this? Is this just life experience? How were you encouraged, who encouraged you?

Responses or insights with respect to these questions hold non-prescriptive potential for conversations amongst educators about relevance of entrepreneurial thinking for education systems. The insights garnered from the thinking of these entrepreneurs for those working with and within educational systems adds to the significance of this study. If through these conversations, one might see the thinking patterns that distinguish the entrepreneur, in a universal sense, from someone who merely runs a business, what might those patterns teach us and what might the identifying entrepreneurial characteristics look like? While many great leaders have been successful in creating personal profit, what motivates entrepreneurs who have chosen a different set of objectives than those focused mainly on profits and what do they count as success? These inquiries were missing in the consideration of entrepreneurial behaviour. This study provided insight and information on the lived experiences of successful entrepreneurs, allowing others to learn from those experiences. Through the interview process, those factors that have most contributed to their success were identified and analyzed.



## Definitions

The following operational definitions clarified meaning for theoretical concepts used in this study (Reynolds, 1971). These working and stipulative definitions provided an opportunity to align understandings of key terms in the study.

*Entrepreneurship:* the pursuit of opportunity without regard to resources currently controlled (Stevenson, 1983). Entrepreneurship encompasses a range of models of entrepreneurial thought and practice (further described in Chapter 2).

*Entrepreneur:* One who pursues opportunity or is driven by the perception of it (Stevenson, 2000); a new venture starter (Gartner, 1989). An entrepreneur may also be one who sees a problem and has a compelling idea as to how to fix it (Hentschke & Caldwell, 2005).

*Entrepreneurial Mind:* This is a metaphor for the intelligence and cognitive/emotional channels, content, governing process that directs the energy of an entrepreneur (Wareham, 1991).

*Educational Leadership:* Barth (2002) described leadership as “making happen what you believe in” (p. 446). Educational leadership can be defined as strategically focusing on leading schools (Davies & Davies, 2005).

*Education Sector:* A distinctive categorization that includes schools, school districts, universities, and all learning organizations within a society.

*Methodology:* The choice of an approach that directly informs the methods used to acquire knowledge (Grix, 2002).

*Method:* Method is considered to be the tool or process one would use to analyze and attain data (Carter & Little, 2007; Grix, 2002).

*Plural sector:* Mintzberg (2014) referred to the three sectors of society as being public, private and plural. He referred to plural as “civil society” or the category that encompasses member owned or non-owned organizations (p. 5). According to Mintzberg, a plural sector also includes social movements and initiatives.

*Qualitative Research:* Denzin and Lincoln (1994) defined qualitative research as “multi method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 2).

*Social entrepreneurship:* In this study, social entrepreneurship refers to entrepreneurial activity where the intent is to “create social value, rather than personal and shareholder wealth” (Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern, 2006, p. 2).

### **Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations**

The Mind of The Entrepreneur: Exploring Lived Experiences was a qualitative exploration of the phenomenon of entrepreneurial thinking, described by the narratives of nine self-identified entrepreneurs (people who suggested, by their own admission or of others’, that they were entrepreneurs). All but one of these participants acknowledged success, in the work of plural, public and private sectors. Anne Duval was the one exception, in that she was still a student and had less experience in all of the sectors. Each participant was interviewed to further understand and develop what we know about how an entrepreneur thinks through the exploration of their lived experience and the possibilities of hidden realities in those experiences. The insights from these individual

interviews and their collective themes were developed through the interpretative capacities of the researcher.

In order to explore this topic, I made certain assumptions about what could be ascertained as truths, identified limitations that were inherent to the study, and recognized biases or vulnerabilities of the study in an attempt to focus on the investigation.

According to Best & Kahn (1993), assumptions are “statements of what the researcher believes to be true but cannot verify” (p. 40).

### **Assumptions Associated With the Study**

Key to this study were the assumptions that:

1. We construct knowledge through our intersections and lived experience within society (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001);
2. This study rested, with reason, on the belief that within the mind of each person there are multiple constructed realities that guide behaviour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001);
3. As an exploratory study, it was appropriate to use the purposive selection processes and criteria used and to consider the individual and collective interview data to explore themes and garner insights such as might have potential future application in the educational domain; and
4. A two-reader approach is helpful in providing an objective stance when analyzing data from interviews. This can be helpful in considering that the interpretations of the quote, to theme, and then to collective were accurate and appropriate.

## **Limitations Associated With the Study**

Research studies are bound by the limitations that define the scope of the study. Creswell (2005) argued that it is important for qualitative researchers to “suggest possible limitations or weaknesses of the study and make recommendations for future research” (p. 252). Limitations for the study included the realities associated with data collection, sample size, and accuracy in responses.

The researcher was limited by the following factors:

1. There were a limited number of people who were interviewed. Accessibility and availability of the participants and the geographic constraints of the researcher limited the study;
2. Willingness of participants to share personal insights with respect to struggles and failures and previously unarticulated understandings may have been a limitation to this study;
3. The capacity of the completed study to offer generalized conclusions was limited by design (Johnson & Waterfield, 2004); rather this study shed light on the particular phenomenon of the entrepreneurial mind (thinking of entrepreneurs (Creswell, 2013), as expressed, understood and conveyed by participants and interpreted by the researcher;
4. It may be argued that there are chasms between lived experience and what the narrator intends (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997). There may be a reliance on textual coherence and structure (Mishler, 1995) and there may be a reliance on the purpose and functions of the story, which reflects the analysis more than the narrative form or structure (Mishler, 1995);

5. People have preconceived definitions and ideas of what, and whom, entrepreneurs can be (i.e., start-up business owners) which may limit an understanding of the scope of who they are and the way they think;
6. In narrative methods of research, Polkinghorne (2007) argued that a researcher should not make claims that theirs is the only correct interpretation. Instead, I argue that this is “a viable interpretation grounded on the assembled texts” (p. 484); and
7. It is recognized that the two-person approach to data analysis was helpful but limited.

### **Delimitations Associated With the Study**

Delimitations refer to a conscious decision to limit some aspect of the research design for a specific purpose (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). Due to the expansive nature of entrepreneurship, there was a conscious effort to be specific as to how this study would emerge. The delimitations were as follows:

1. The deliberate focus on a certain type of entrepreneur. Extant literature on entrepreneurship commonly rests in the study of business entrepreneurs, with a great deal of emphasis on business start-up. In this study, I delimited interviews to a purposively selected set of entrepreneurs who had also worked outside of the business sector (and/or in market-venture start-ups); and
2. The number of participants was practically delimited but a satisfactory level of saturation was achieved.

## **Organization of the Dissertation**

The dissertation was organized in five chapters. In Chapter 1, I introduced the research problem with a discussion of the background influences to this study. In particular, a case was presented to further consider how an entrepreneur thinks, and clarified that the objective of this research was to explore the lived experience of entrepreneurs who have had significant influence on plural, education and political arenas. The chapter also suggested that a richer understanding of how these entrepreneurs think presents potential for garnering insights such as might benefit plural sectors (including education systems). This chapter concluded with a consideration of how the assumptions, limitations and delimitations of defined and clarified the study.

In Chapter two, I offer a background of entrepreneurial study as outlined in the literature. Three time periods emerged from this historical account of entrepreneurship: Classical, Neoclassical, and the Modern Theorist timeline. Each era served to organize the accounts of the theorists as their work emerged in France, Britain, Germany and North America. This section concluded with a summary of modern thought as it related to entrepreneurial opportunity and motivation.

In Chapter three, I address the interpretivist and qualitative research design, introduce the phenomenon focused and narrative design for the study as well as the methods that were used for data gathering, analysis and interpretation of the data. This chapter concludes with a description of the nature of the participants and ethical considerations.

In Chapter four, I introduce the participants and why they were chosen. This chapter also provided a summary of the interviewee responses as they related to and addressed the research questions.

Chapter five includes a summary of the study, the problem, research question and key responses from those interviewed. In conclusion, I addressed the implications for further research, identification and practice of entrepreneurs.

## CHAPTER 2

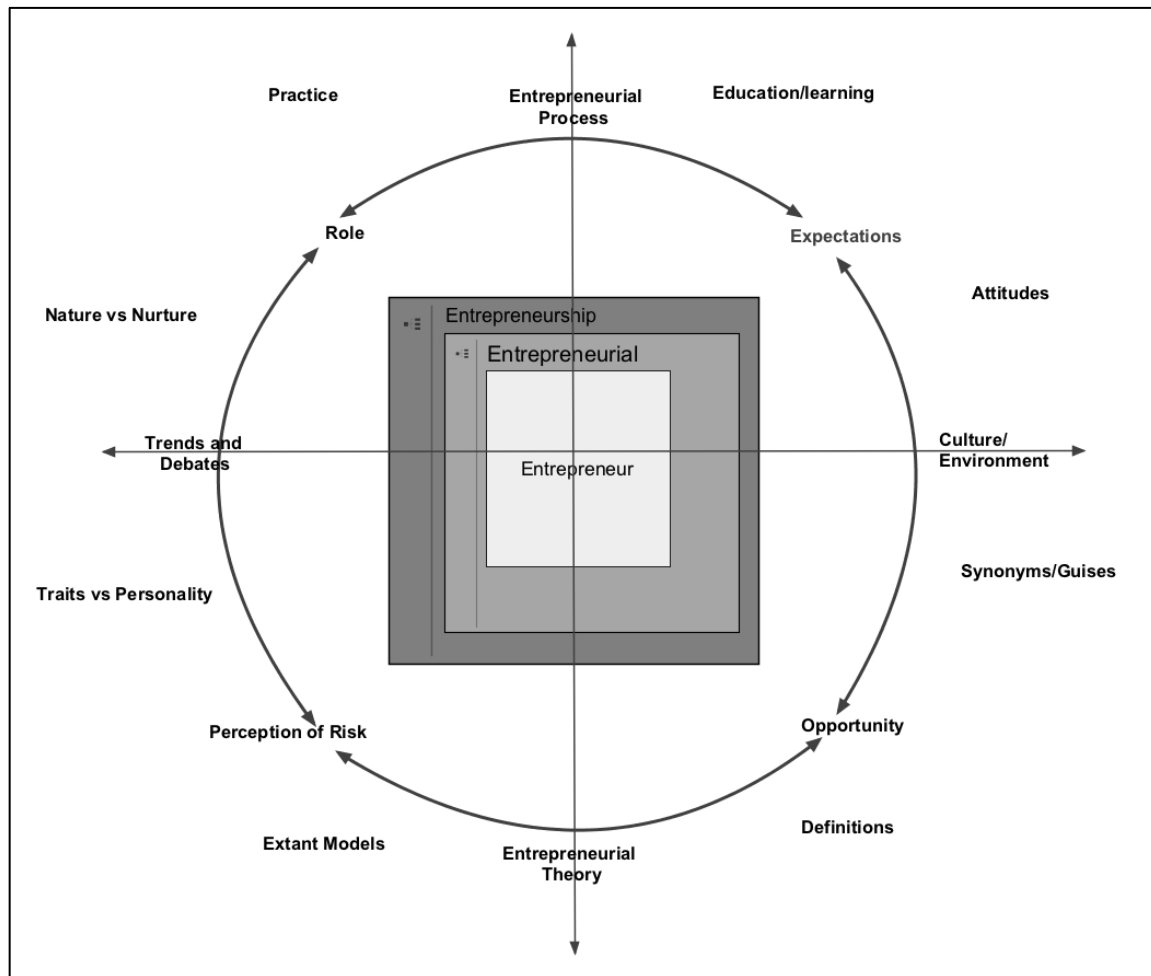
### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

*Thus, it is fruitful for us to focus on how entrepreneurs acquire knowledge about the environment, and how knowledge is processed in the minds of entrepreneurs. (Busenitz & Lau, 1996, p. 94)*

This chapter provides an overview of the literature surrounding entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, relevant to this research. In this chapter, I formulate working definitions of entrepreneur, entrepreneurial, and entrepreneurship, by journeying through a historical context that would lead to these descriptions. Next I look at the idea that entrepreneurs are denoted with specific rhetoric within their culture or environment. I consider theory as relates to the themes of entrepreneur, entrepreneurial and entrepreneurship and then considered current trends and debates that surrounded the study and writing on entrepreneurs, especially as it relates to entrepreneurs in education, business, and social sectors. I then look at current ideas that underpin the processes of becoming, or enhancing the effectiveness of, entrepreneurial behaviour. Finally I consider how the literature addresses the phenomenon of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs themselves by looking at studies that consider expectations, opportunity and perception of risk and role. In doing so, it became evident that each dimension is not an island to itself. In fact, these concepts invariably exist within the domain of more than one framework, and can deepen our understanding of that concept as it is viewed through other frameworks.

Within this chapter, the selected literature form a foundation for this study on the mind of an entrepreneur. In Figure 2.1, I provide a visual overview of the chapter as outlined in current literature.





**Figure 2.1.** Current themes in literature

### **Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurial, and Entrepreneurship**

*The entrepreneur is a maker of history, but his guide in making it is his judgment of possibilities and not a calculation of certainties. (Herbert & Link, 1982, p. viii)*

This review begins with an analysis of the origins of the study of entrepreneurship. Early classical economic tradition explored the source of the entrepreneurial talent as the entrepreneur, himself/herself as an individual who was unique and had specific abilities (e.g., Cantillon, 1931; Kirzner, 1979; Knight, 1921; Say, 1845; Schumpeter, 1934). Both historically and through to more recent years, there have been theorists who hold to the notion that entrepreneurs are unique, in that they possess something that distinguishes

them from non-entrepreneurs. The aim of this section is to identify historical and intellectual roots that have formed the emerging discipline we have come to accept as entrepreneurship.

### **A Brief History of Entrepreneurship**

Researchers often call the field of entrepreneurship young and diverse since the rapidity of change drives academia to constantly reformulating our knowledge and predicting what the future will look like (Lohrke & Landstrom, 2012). Contrary to this view of entrepreneurial research, considering the contributions of early thinkers can reveal insight into the nature and thinking of entrepreneurs that can be valuable to modern thought and understanding of the mind of an entrepreneur. Witzel (2012) argued that it is through history that we are able to examine and challenge the way that entrepreneurs are considered in the present from a new perspective. An understanding of the origins of entrepreneurship will assist in providing a foundational piece that will unearth existing notions surrounding this complex yet dynamic phenomenon (Neergaard & Ulhoi, 2007).

Through history, the attempt to understand, encourage and replicate entrepreneurial behaviour has been flanked with unpredictability and a reconceptualization of what it means to be an entrepreneur (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006). Early speculations of entrepreneurial behaviour could have existed in primitive societies. In medieval and ancient times a trading and bartering system for survival mimicked our idea of entrepreneurship (Baumol, 1968). Baumol argued that this leg of entrepreneurship has always been present in societies though the manifestation of it is dependence on the culture itself.

In ancient Rome, generation of wealth by participation in industry or commerce was not allowed. The rich were rewarded by status of land ownership, usury, and under-the-table money (payoffs) by the governing ruler (Murphy, Lio & Welsch, 2006). These regulatory controls encouraged wealth accumulation through status rather than business or entrepreneurial prowess.

In medieval China (1300-1500 AD) entrepreneurial activity was also discouraged (Baumol, 1990). Land and money of the wealthy would be confiscated when the empirical treasury ran low, forcing those who had money to hide it in non-visible investments. As with the early Roman Empire, institutional and social constraints discouraged business entrepreneurs.

Contextual forces also played a significant role in entrepreneurial activity in earliest medieval societies. While social status and land ownership signaled wealth and success, like centuries later, it was virtually impossible for average citizens to gain material wealth beyond what they already had (Murphy, Lio & Welsch, 2006). Just as class positioning dominated ones ability to be entrepreneurial, during the next 500 years, the toll of warfare continued to nurture the unpredictability of who had possessions and status.

Between 500-1000 AD population increases made trading locally more difficult due to limited resources. As a result, populations dispersed and warred for economic gain. A new opportunity for entrepreneurs emerged. Baumol (1990) argued that warfare became a way that entrepreneurs could acquire land and goods that would have been, normally, out of their reach. The accumulation of wealth began its shift toward innovative methods of acquisition.

Through the later part of the Middle Ages (1000-1500), the influence of the church helped drive forward entrepreneurial interests and reward. With the reduction of military activity and increased support by the church, opportunity for lucrative entrepreneurial activity in areas such as “architecture, engineering and farming” became “honorable” (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006, p. 17). The number of people who were actually considered to be entrepreneurs in this period was still small since many were successful simply because they were privy to information that served to advantage them (Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006). Even so, interest in practice as well as in understanding entrepreneurship had emerged. Warfare became the instrument by which entrepreneurs were able to shift the systems of privilege to innovative ways to acquire wealth (Baumol, 1990). The middle ages were breeding grounds for farming and architecture to begin to do things differently.

Some of the first scholarly writings about entrepreneurs resulted from economists as they sought to develop theories to explain this phenomenon. Cantillon (1931) was one of the first to use and define the term *entrepreneur* from the root word *entreprendre*: to take; to do something different (Long, 1983). A later definition was found in the French dictionary, *Dictionnaire de la Langue Francaise*, wherein an entrepreneur was defined as someone who had the courage and stamina to accomplish something –though in this time period, it was more common that the risk was a willingness to lose belongings and even one’s own life (Landstrom, 2010). Even so, this increased propensity toward risk reflected the growing acceptance of entrepreneurs into economic literature and led to an interest by early French theorists to begin to consider entrepreneurship as a worthwhile area of discussion and study.

In the classical age (1437-1850), theorists began to more formally develop entrepreneurial thought (Wee, et al., 1994). At the time, the French and Germans recognized entrepreneurs as risk takers and innovators (e.g., Cantillon, 1680-1734; Bandeau, 1730-1792; Say, 1767-1832; and Riedel, 1809-1872) (Hoselitz, 1951). The British valued the contribution of entrepreneurs for their economic value (e.g., Smith, 1723-1790; and Ricardo, 1772-1823).

In the Neo Classical Period, more concentrated attention was paid to the entrepreneur himself. The British, most notably Marshall (1842-1924) identified the entrepreneur as having rare, instinctual foresight and natural abilities when it comes to calculated risk and ability (Marshall, 1920). Mill (1806-1873) was one of the first to argue that not everyone could be an entrepreneur (Mill, 1844). German and Australian theorists, Weber (1904) and Menger (1871) identified entrepreneurs as free spirits, driven by social culture, and who risked only in so much as they were able to profit from it.

On the other hand, Schumpeter (1934) combined much of the previous theory on entrepreneurs to affirm the unsurpassed role that entrepreneurs play in society, in economics and in evolutionary change. Once again the idea, that the entrepreneur is a major player in the world of economic revolution, fostered a belief that entrepreneurial abilities were somehow unique and possibly intuitive. Schumpeter argued that entrepreneurs see things differently; they forge a path that is driven by what they see as possibilities that only they can imagine. They think differently.

While Davenport (1861-1931) further developed the role of the entrepreneur in the idea of supply and demand, Frank Knight (1885-1972) perpetuated the belief that entrepreneurs were unique, intuitive and used critical judgment. He introduced the sense

that this was not something that could be taught. If everyone could learn critical judgment and could exploit opportunity, there would no longer be a need for entrepreneurs (Gifford, 2005). Then, from the late 30s to the later part of the 70s, writing on the entrepreneur “virtually disappeared from the theoretical literature” (Baumol, 1968).

In what has been referred to as the Modern time period (1950-1980), more is learned about the uniqueness of the entrepreneur. Researchers argued that knowledge is not equal (Hayek, 1945) and is inherent to entrepreneurs (von Mises, 1969). Von Mises expanded Knightian thought by criticizing educators who limit and routinize learning in such a way that creative geniuses are stifled and punished for new ideas versus encouraged. He also distinguished the difference between a capitalist who simply makes money on investments or business and one who purposefully violates the old common thought by thinking differently. Leibenstein (1968) argued that entrepreneurs worked outside of clearly defined roles, filling gaps in supply, demand and routine. While Leibenstein saw the entrepreneur as possessing rare characteristics, he also argued that these characteristics could be identified in business managers or owners. If history were the way we write the past, and technology is how we look at the future, Zoltan and Acs (2005) would argue that entrepreneurship is “what happens at the intersection of history and technology” (p. 7). The language of the past gives way to unexploited opportunity that can influence economic and social outcomes (Oinas & Malecki, 2002) but can be “productive, unproductive or destructive depending on the incentive that exists in the system” (Zoltan & Acs, 2005, p. 7).

Both historical and current literature that articulates our faith, acceptance and understanding of entrepreneurs is subsumed under four broad frameworks (Schein, 2010):

Culture/Environments, Entrepreneurial Theories, Trends and Debates, and Entrepreneurial Processes. Within these frames, four themes emerge: role (e.g., Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991), expectations (e.g., Casson 2005; Murphy, Liao & Welsh, 2006), opportunity (e.g., Kuratko, 2009), and perception of risk (e.g., Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Gibb, 1997). As a way of further considering the literature, the remaining section will be divided into frames with a consideration for the themes and how they are interconnected.

### **Framework One: Culture/Environment**

Researchers argue that it is through one's culture, or environment, that entrepreneurs are viewed (e.g., Mintzberg, 1989; Weick & Quinn, 1999; Orlikowski, 1996). Historically, entrepreneurs were born out of a society's need for change or survival (Landstrom, 1999). Even today, one's success is characterized by an ability to maneuver successfully through change (e.g., Fullan, 2012; 2002; Fisher & Koch, 2004). Whether change is driven by external factors, such as the economic or political climate, or by internal motivators, such as special interest groups and uncertainty, it is a reaction to the culture or environment one is in (Mintzberg, 1989; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Gartner's (1989) work looked at entrepreneurs' role as it lies within a fourfold perspective: the person themselves as they start the venture, the actions needed to get it going, the venture itself, and the environment that will surround and influence the venture. Change is characterized by one's ability to adapt or edit ideas based on the expectations, attitudes, understandings and perceived opportunities that punctuate one's environment (Orlikowski, 1996).

Gasse and Tremblay (2011) argued that cultural and social factors dictate perceived desirability of an entrepreneurial action. Perceived desirability is considered to be the extent to which one finds a particular behaviour to be acceptable. They posited that one's social environment dictates whether intentions are socially desirable and plays a big part in entrepreneur's intention to act because role models in their social circle influence people.

Global Entrepreneur Monitor (GEM) consortium (2005) – in conjunction with Mazars, London Business School, and Babson College – reported that in countries where certain national conditions exist (such as: policies, support, education, openness and opportunity), high-expectation entrepreneurial activity (entrepreneurial companies that employ more than 20 employees) is also high. Through this study, GEM found that Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, had nine times as much high-expectation entrepreneurial activity than did Europe and Asia. In their study, developed Asian countries were the lowest (Autio, 2005). GEM concluded that among the conditions that support entrepreneurial activity, expectations and attitudes were key contributors to the existence of entrepreneurship (Autio, 2005).

### **Societal expectations on entrepreneurs.**

Priorities and societal rules of expected behaviour (expectations) influence conditions for entrepreneurial activity and the framework through which it emerges (Steensma, Marino & Weaver, 2000). Increasingly, the entrepreneurial attitude and behaviour is considered critical to the prosperity of the global economy (Steensma, Marino & Weaver, 2000). Entrepreneurial activity contributes significantly to economic and social life by: (a) generating jobs (e.g., Hynes, 1996; Van Praag & Versloot, 2008).



Autio (2005) projected that entrepreneurial activity creates over 62% of all new jobs; (b) encouraging and smoothing economic productivity and efficiency; and (c) filling a niche for a specific sector of our population—innovators (Autio, 2005).

Because of this, our most common understanding of entrepreneurs exists in business (e.g., Cantillon, 1755; Say, 1845; Turgot, 1793; Schumpeter, 1934).

Considerable effort has been dedicated to defining and identifying the role of the entrepreneurs, especially when it comes to the startup of small business (e.g., Gartner, 1989; McKenzie, Ugbeh & Smothers, 2007; Audretsch, 2006).

Alternately, researchers such as Steensma, Marino and Weaver (2000) argued that through the socialization process, entrepreneurs learn to display the values of the culture, which affects their choices of entrepreneurial activities as well. In a study of cooperative strategies, they argued that the competitiveness, self-interest and the risk orientation of a given culture, directly impacts future entrepreneurs and their choices. For example, the authors found that more competitive and individualistic cultures had more rules, safeguards, and restrictions in place as a means of protection. In this study, Steensma, Marino and Weaver (2000) concluded that a by-product of a less cooperative culture was reduced amounts of entrepreneurial behaviour. Cultural expectations lead to attitudes that form beliefs and guide behaviour.

### **Attitudes surrounding entrepreneurs.**

In the *Cambridge Handbook of Psychology, Health and Medicine*, Eisner (1997) argued that attitudes and beliefs are “indicators of how people make sense of their experience” (p. 3). The author further distinguished beliefs as more easily settled using truth or fact, whereas attitudes refer more closely to “judgments of value or preference,

which go beyond mere factual evidence” (p. 3). What matters most, he continues, “is how strongly such thoughts and feelings are held” (p. 3). For entrepreneurs, openness and support for entrepreneurial activity can promote the values that underline entrepreneurial growth (Autio, 2005).

Cantillon (1680-1734) first linked entrepreneurs to business in the first chapter of his work *Essai Sur la Nature du Commerce en General* (1755). Cantillon recognized the entrepreneur in the class of economic agents through which profit, in the face of uncertainty, was their mantra (Hebert & Link, 1989; Murphy et al., 2006; Landstrom & Lohrke, 2010) (see historical section for a more thorough discussion). History supports the modern belief that entrepreneurial activity is firmly planted in economics (e.g., Landstrom & Lohrke, 2010; Zoltan & Audretsch, 2005). Current literature has supported this attitude.

Because of its firm grounding in economics, and the belief that theoretical knowledge will increase the numbers and success of entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial programs in business schools, colleges and universities, have grown exponentially (Matlay, 2005; Fayolle, 2007). Shane (2003) argued, “... the level of interest in entrepreneurship among business school students is also extremely high... every university campus, it seems, has a wealth of courses about how to start and finance new business.” Though the attitude exists that business-training programs are imperative for entrepreneurial success, there is a lack of empirical evidence to show that formal courses in entrepreneurship or even small business start up increases the likelihood that one will be entrepreneurial (Matlay, 2005; Vesper & Gartner, 1997). Another disturbing trend is the use of new business start-up percentages to measure the success of entrepreneurial

training programs. In each case, one of the key criteria used to rank the program success was the percentage of new start-up businesses by students (Retrieved from [www.entrepreneur.com](http://www.entrepreneur.com)). Even so, the top five ranking entrepreneur graduate programs in the United States showed that on average of 85% of their graduates failed to start a new business (Retrieved from [www.entrepreneur.com/topcolleges/grad](http://www.entrepreneur.com/topcolleges/grad)). This could be considered an indication that there may be some disparity in society's understanding of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship training.

We are falling behind in our ability to balance the need for entrepreneurs in our schools with how we nurture their development and growth in our public or private, Kindergarten to High School, programs (Hentschke, 2009). As school divisions struggle to balance funding and need, site-based management has changed the nature of the role of a principal. Perhaps Schein (2010) would describe the education system as a culture that is overbalanced in terms of internal integration: a commonality of language and purpose, inclusion and exclusion, rewards and punishments, and its own distribution of power. And while there exists an understanding of boundaries inclusion, in some ways, there is an ability to adapt to currencies outside of its walls.

Since 1983 and the report on *A Nation at Risk*, the conversations surrounding the marriage of entrepreneurs with schools attempted to perforate the protective walls that divided educators and economists (Sandler, 2010). Some argued that a market model of education would foster an attitude fearful of competition and regulations set by non-educators (Hentschke, 2009; Ellison, 2012). The fluctuating funding that reflects economic movement and the restlessness of entrepreneurs' posed risks for educators (Sandler, 2010). In the market, there was a belief that involvement by stakeholders and

competition would create educational opportunity and excellence (Chubb, 2006; Hess & Finn, 2007, Hess, 2006). Ellison (2012) asserted that competition that provides “bottom-up accountability driven by parents/consumers making choices based on their own self interest” is destructive to the purposes of education (p. 120). He added that competing for funding in conjunction with regulatory measures dictated by non-educators are articulations of power rather than measures of reform.

One way educators are being asked to look outside of the polis is through prescribed involvement of business entrepreneurs in school governance. Sandler (2010) encouraged the partnering of corporations for funding, volunteering options and policy-making reasons. “The single most important thing that business leaders can do is to encourage their employees to get involved in the schools,” Sandler (2010, p. 123) declared. He argued that corporate entrepreneurs possess “vision, creativity, passion and persistence” which enables them to respond to market needs for innovation (p. 134).

On the other hand, Fullan (1997) argued against a type of dependency on corporate resources and leadership. “Paradoxically,” Fullan stated, “dependency is fostered both by emphasis on tradition and by demands for innovation”(p. ix). Principals can find themselves on the receiving end of changes that are externally initiated—a pattern that would promote a culture of dependency (Barth, 2002).

Also, through the move to more innovative practices within the system, many studies have failed to consider the role of the principal. In a study done by Childress (2010), there was clearly an attitude of helplessness, by these leaders, to their jobs and responsibilities. The author reported a 90% increase in what principals perceive to be demand placed on them. In the same study, 61% of principals self reported a decrease in effectiveness. At least 84%

recognized a decrease in their authority and 92% of principals reported an increase in complex and procedural demands. With expectations, such as “site-based management, school-business links, and standards’ of assessment.... The definition of the very job of the principal has undergone fundamental change” (Childress, 2010, p. 2). Childress also revealed that 91% of these leaders believed that they did not have what it takes to fulfill all their responsibilities.

More studies identify educational entrepreneurs as educators who attempt to meet needs by leaving teaching to create an educational business (Leisey & Lavaroni, 2000). Teachers or principals, who have experienced a sense of helplessness within the school system or a lack of resources to support how they want to teach or lead, create a business to fill the void they felt (Leisey & Lavaroni, 2000; Hentschke, 2009). In this way, they were considered educational entrepreneurs.

Far fewer researchers agree with Kent (1990), that teachers and principals need to be entrepreneurs themselves. They need to be mentors, active and “committed to the principles of economic and entrepreneurship education” (p. 244). Brown and Cornwall (2000) argued the need for an entrepreneurial principal to be the one who fosters entrepreneurial thinking and creates an entrepreneurial community within the operation and teaching of the school.

In spite of what Hentschke (2009) refers to as an attitude of distrust for business by educators, Hentschke (2009) he argued that most agree, “(for better or worse) that largely the public school enterprise is taking on characteristics of businesses (for-profit and not-for-profit [plural]) and that, as a consequence, opportunities are growing for individuals with greater proportions of entrepreneurial characteristics than has been the

case” (p. 148). One might argue that principals should be at the center of change; not always take safe paths in situations that are more complex, and act with courage (e.g., Block, 1987). Senge suggested, “At its heart, the traditional view of leadership is based on assumptions of people’s powerlessness, their lack of personal vision and inability to master the forces of change, deficits which can be remedied only by a few great leaders” (1990, p. 340). Often the thought that school leaders should be entrepreneurial has been dissuaded by the belief that educational entrepreneurs are only those who create a business to enhance educational resources (e.g., Leisey & Lavaroni (2000). The movement towards on-site management for schools demands that we consider more innovative types of leaders; leaders who are willing to risk; leaders who look for new types of opportunity.

### **Entrepreneurial opportunity.**

Much of the literature that focuses on entrepreneurial activity reflects the thinking of our market driven society and the desire that entrepreneurship is best contained as an activity where one discovers, evaluates, and exploits opportunities as a way of meeting market needs through means that had not existed before (Venkataraman, 1997; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Opportunity is both “alertness to new opportunities and the actions following the discovery of an opportunity” (Koppl & Minniti, 2005, p. 92). Recognizing opportunity is a pivotal piece in entrepreneurship as it is manifest in new ideas, goods, production, transportation and enterprise (e.g., Stevenson & Gumpert, 1985; Stevenson & Jarillo, 1990, Sarasvathy, 2001; Murphy, et al., 2006; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

Within a culture, innovation transforms systems from the inside out—destroying what is old and replacing it with something new. This essential process is what

Schumpeter (1942) referred to as “creative destruction” (p. 83)—necessary to keep the system from a sure state of ruin and clarifying the role of entrepreneurs in the marketplace. According to Schumpeter, as others adopt and imitate the change and the system is moving toward equilibrium (i.e., the perfect balance between what is and what is needed). In this way, an entrepreneur and his or her environment are reflective. In both, tension becomes stable until it is disrupted by the need for another new idea. If a system could exist without change, according to Schumpeter, there would be no need for entrepreneurs as there would be no opportunity. On the other hand, it has been argued that opportunity and innovation itself breeds more opportunity, stimulates activity in the system, and sets standards for profit (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

Kirzner (1973) characterized opportunity as an alertness that others may miss. He saw opportunity more as knowledge than economics. As a continual movement toward order, Kirzner argued that opportunity is characterized by recognition of deficiencies in one’s environment rather than the creation of disruption. Where Schumpeter visualized entrepreneurs in a destructive shroud of power and profit, Kirzner saw an imperfect system where the recognition of opportunity, in spite of resources available, gave birth to the purest form of entrepreneurship. Either way, both Schumpeter and Kirzner’s work sectors on a belief that change is both a part of the market system and one’s environment, and is foremost in opportunity recognition for entrepreneurs.

Hayek (1945) and von Mises (1949) described opportunity as the availability of information; both in what is lacking as much as what is available. He formalized the role of competition as a driving force of change. Competition drives the degree to which subjective knowledge (i.e., innovative ideas) interplays with objective marketplace data

(i.e., what is presently occurring). What we know within our culture or environment, directly affects one's ability as an entrepreneur.

Further to the consideration that one's environment directly affects opportunity, Hayek (1948) was the first to consider the premise of time. Hayek argued that "the actions of one person must take place successively in time" (1948, p. 37) thus encouraging the notion that the entrepreneur need not know everything about the product, the process (Schumpeter, 1943) or even the actions of others (Kirzner, 1973) to explain future activity that may not, at that moment, even exist. Hayek illustrated that decisions are built upon previous decisions that will also serve to change future decisions. So for Hayek, opportunities for the entrepreneur are "all acts of choice which are made necessary by the scarcity of means available for our ends" (1948, p. 68). To this end, opportunity becomes entrepreneurial when one has to make a decision outside of the realm of one's own knowledge.

Murphy and Marvel (2007), argued that it is "episodic knowledge" (sporadic knowledge of trajectory and end results) that is core in understanding opportunity (p. 171). Drawing from Hayek's (1945) work, Murphy (2007) suggested that "market actors create new data through purposeful action, which affect how other actors perceive their own circumstances on the most basic level" (p. 172). The author deemed that the "external actions of others bear directly on an entrepreneur's episodic knowledge" (p. 172). It does not follow patterns or rules, but is a fluid process of decision-making that results from the movement, and effects on that movement, by an entrepreneur. This kind of knowledge is hard to operationalize and helps to account for the fact that so few



research designs are able to explain how entrepreneurs respond to opportunity (Venkataraman, 1997).

Entrepreneurial opportunities exist as cultural circumstance combines with entrepreneurial alertness; the source of which remains elusive (Companys & McMullen, 2006). Creating something from idea and circumstance is different than market opportunities that are a result of optimization of what exists (Kirzner, 1997; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Opportunities provide the impulsion for entrepreneurial action (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006), though not everyone recognizes these opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). A source of entrepreneurial opportunity is knowledge of needs and wants and how they can be fulfilled (Ridgeway & Erickson, 2000). For this reason, the first to identify and exploit an opportunity lies with the first person or organization to develop resources and capabilities that will enable them to exploit these opportunities (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). The difficulty with sustainability comes when others adopt those practices. The entrepreneur must live in a world of possibilities, not rest in the laurels of what is.

Entrepreneurs have become the most powerful economic tool of our century (Kuratko, 2009) and yet we know so little about how they think and what drives their ability to act on opportunity (Krueger, 2007). Gartner and Baker (2010) argued that opportunity is directly related to a person's system of beliefs, their values and their ability to imagine. In studies surrounding the cognition of opportunity, Krueger (2007) identified the need to further support and nurture entrepreneurial potential, which he argues comes directly from "increasing the quality and quantity of entrepreneurial thinking" within the community and environment. So, a community (be it business or constituency) must operate in such a way

that entrepreneurs are able to foster new ideas and be nurtured by the belief that they are desired and accepted (Kuratko, 2003).

### **Summary of Framework One**

In this section I looked at current literature as it relates to the influences of one's culture or environment on perception and entrepreneurial activity. Within this framework, societal expectations on entrepreneurial behaviour, attitudes surrounding entrepreneurs and opportunity were considered.

### **Framework Two: Entrepreneurial Theory**

In this second frame I reflect on some of the theorists whose work more closely aligns with this study. I then consider theories that influence thinking with regard to opportunity and then how we have come to define entrepreneurship. Next I present a critical look at some of the extant models of entrepreneurship and end with a journey through some of the theoretical understanding of risk perception.

Schumpeter (1942), Kirzner (1973), and Hayek (1948) were influenced by the culture and environment supporting the marketplace (see above)—a foundational piece in the construction of theory. As I have outlined above, there are many voices in the long and diverse history of entrepreneurial thought. I highlight the work of only a few theorists due to the longevity and permeability of their thinking into the arguments that still emerge up to seven decades later.

Schumpeter's (1942) theory of "creative destruction" (p. 83), as described earlier, revolved around an entrepreneur as one who destroys what is to develop what can be. He argued that this is an "essential fact of capitalism;" one that left unchecked could cause systemic ruin in the long term. In response, he recognized the need for "conditions,"

“production” and the “organization” to also change with this innovation; what he called “quality competition” (p. 85). The results of this disequilibrium are that others will follow and imitate the innovation, restoring equilibrium.

Schumpeter’s focused most of his work on the individual while Miller (1983) introduced the idea that there are entrepreneurs at an organizational level. Miller (1983) argued that the organization’s leader determined the degree to which entrepreneurship existed in the organization (Miller 1983). Miller’s theories aimed to increase entrepreneurial orientation literature. He considered the impact of innovation, what it meant to be proactive and a risk-taker in an organization’s performance and success (e.g., Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Zahra& Garvis, 2000; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2003; Jantunen, Puumalainen, Saarenketo & Kylaheiko, 2005).

In the late nineteen hundreds, Carl Menger (1840-1921) and Leon Walras (1834-1910) popularized the idea of neoclassical economics. This theory was founded on a belief that an individual will rationally seek to maximize profit or utility as they respond to supply and demand. Marshall’s (1920) idea of neo-classical theory was in direct contrast to Schumpeter’s destructive creationist views. For Marshall, the focus of this theory was to maintain the conditions that would be necessary to sustain equilibrium. Marshall (1920) argued that the entrepreneur exists within the realms of “perfect competition” (p. 297). The entrepreneur would have full knowledge of his trade and see the new opportunities necessary for slowly replacing old commodities with new. In Marshall’s “standard theory,” the diversity of firms in an industry would not be for competition sake, but that there might be a balance in production and fulfilling needs (p. 280). Yet he continued by saying “...a characteristic task of modern manufacturer is that

of creating new wants by showing people something which they have never thought of having before; but which they want to have as soon as the notion is suggested to them” (p. 280). Marshall believed that entrepreneurs would anticipate the actions of their rivals; though it would seem unnecessary if their decisions were not competitive in nature and there was no effect on the market price.

On the other hand, Kirzner (1973) took a more Neo-Austrian (processes-focused) approach wherein he theorized that entrepreneurs are saviors of an inefficient market. Unlike Schumpeter (1942), whose theories posit the idea that innovations are a constant tension between a stable market and change, Kirzner saw the market as inefficient, making room for entrepreneurs to recognize opportunity. Kirzner argued that the truest form of an entrepreneur was one who could identify opportunities in spite of the resources he held. There was more to the Kirznerian entrepreneur than one who creatively destroys an environment by creating a product for a better price. This theory would lay groundwork for Stevenson’s (1983) entrepreneur later defined as someone who would pursue “opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control” (p. 384). Instead of a creative destruction of harmony, Kirzner’s (1973) entrepreneur was one who seemed to have “alertness to undiscovered opportunities” (p. 31).

Kirzner’s (1979) theory is based on what he called “spontaneous learning”—a “hunch or a vision” (p. 168). He explained this through the story of Crusoe and how “...his actions reflect[ed] his hunches... the essence of entrepreneurial vision, and what sets it apart from knowledge as a resource, is reflected in Crusoe’s lack of self-consciousness concerning it... the essence of entrepreneurial vision” (p. 169). Kirzner

argued that an entrepreneur acts on subconscious hunches, a vision that previously had not been considered.

There is a need for theory regarding entrepreneurship and serve to remind the reader that the historical foundations of entrepreneurship should be expanded (e.g., Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007; Acs & Audretsch, 2005). Casson (2005) argued that there is a “gulf between economic theories of entrepreneurship, which tend to be abstract, and studies of entrepreneurial behaviour, which tend to be more about individual behaviour” (p. 192) Casson contended that theories (such as Gartner’s (1985) work) tend to limit the entrepreneur as a new venture starter. In addition, people tend to be labeled employees, not entrepreneurs, unless they are in the beginning stages of the business (Casson, 2005).

#### **Theory surrounding entrepreneurial opportunity.**

I sought to look more closely at the literature as it underpins opportunity, suggests influences on thinking, offers definitions, extant models and highlights the notion of perception of risk. Previously, I outlined what the literature had suggested about how opportunity is influenced by one’s knowledge of needs and wants, and how culture can be the driver of what we accept as important. On the other hand, theory can also influence one’s thinking about the entrepreneur and his or her role in society. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defined opportunity as “a time, juncture, or condition of things favorable to an end or purpose, or admitting of something being done or affected.” (Simpson & Weiner, 2006). Using this definition, entrepreneurial opportunity could be considered to be that which stimulates movement or interest toward change. Theorists have sought to understand what opportunity looks like for the entrepreneur. Early theorists, such as Knight (1921) and Hayek (1945), as well as more contemporary researchers, such as

Sarasvathy (2001) and Shane (2003), have studied opportunity in the attempts to unpack a deeper understanding of the entrepreneurial phenomenon.

In Knight's (1965) dissertation, he viewed opportunity in terms of capacities of the human mind to make judgments about things that are more or less correct based on "an intuitive sense of values" (p. 227). Knight argued that uncertainty of things makes life challenging in both the good and bad sense. The lack of rationality that uncertainty brings, also forces us to strive after them. His view of opportunity is based on an understanding that humans have an "inveterate belief" that they can be lucky. Some believe that uncertainty can be overcome with luck (Knight, 1965, p. 236). He also argued that humans have an intuition, or superstition, that can guide us through uncertainty and that there are decisions that are made with no other knowledge than the fact that there is a possibility of losses or gains. For Knight, the entrepreneur looks for previous patterns. He argued, "... it is hard to imagine an intelligent individual considering any single case as absolutely isolated" (Knight, 1965, p. 234). The entrepreneur also increases and consolidates his resources, and then shortens the process. Both actions help to decrease the impact of a bad decision (Frantz, 2005).

Hayek (1945) presented the notion of dispersed knowledge. He argued that it is unlikely that any two people share exactly the same knowledge. Hayek believed in the idea that there exist two types of knowledge. Scientific rigor is that of experts in the field while knowledge is what comes from cultural or relational norms as such that the individual can only determine. Dispersed knowledge can be key in understanding why we have uncertainty in the first place (Shane, 2000), and possibly why everyone does not see the same opportunity.

From her study of new venture entrepreneurs, Sarasvathy (2001) concluded that “effectual reasoning” over casual reasoning is what propels entrepreneurs into opportunity (p. 2). In Sarasvathy’s theory of effectual reasoning, she argued that opportunity, rather than beginning with a goal, begins with a “given set of means and allows goals to emerge contingently over time from the varied imagination and diverse aspirations of the founders and the people they interact with” (p. 2). She deemed casual reasoning to be like fulfilling a plan that had a clear goal and strategy. Effectual reasoning, on the other hand was more like an uncharted journey to which the adventure lends itself to the final goal. While Sarasvathy (2001) argued that some of the best entrepreneurs use both casual and effectual reasoning to chart opportunity, their preference for effectual reasoning is more evident in the early stages of the venture. According to the author, every entrepreneur begins with three categories of substance: (a) “Who they are—their traits, tastes and abilities;” (b) “What they know—their education, training, expertise, and experiences;” and, (c) “Whom they know—their social and professional networks” (p. 3). As they act, new possibilities emerge and desired goals are actuated. Surprises, according to Sarasvathy (2001), are the norm rather than the unexpected. According to the author, “the unexpected is the stuff of entrepreneurial experience and transforming the unpredictable into the utterly mundane is the special domain of the expert entrepreneur” (p. 3). Sarasvathy (2001) argued that entrepreneurs are different than others in that they think “effectually” in that they have a belief that there is a future and that by their actions they can create and control that future. To entrepreneurs, it is more important to work with the people who will shape the future than worry about predicting it.

For others, there are differing opinions of how to define entrepreneurship (e.g., McKenzie, Ugbah, & Smothers, 2007; Gartner, 1989; Katz, 1992; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Van de Ven, 1993). Further, I consider the theoretical underpinnings of existing definitions of entrepreneur, entrepreneurial or entrepreneurship.

### **The emerging definition of entrepreneurship.**

For centuries, writers have wrestled with varying definitions and interpretations in an attempt to better understand the phenomenon we have come to know as an entrepreneur (Churchill & Lewis, 1986). Throughout history, various themes have emerged. Many have argued that we have limited or generalized who is an entrepreneur by how we have defined it (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991). There is not an agreed upon definition of entrepreneurship nor one that seems to fit in every situation (Churchill & Lewis, 1986). While entrepreneurship, as a field of research, is considered to be young and formative the first use of the word was considered to be over 300 years ago.

The early 18<sup>th</sup> century economist, Richard Cantillon (1931), was one of the first to use and define the term entrepreneur. He described an entrepreneur as one who is “a rational decision-maker who assumes the risk and management of the firm”(Webster, 1976, p. 27). He also defined the person as one who created organizations by either extending or reorganizing them, then running them (Webster, 1976).

In the last two decades, entrepreneurs have been defined by what they do and who they are (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Behaviourists in early history focused on individual skills and characteristics (Landstrom, 1999). It was their successful contribution to the market place that has firmly planted the entrepreneur as a strategic player in economic thought (e.g., Cantillon, 1931; Say, 1845; Turgot, 1793; Schumpeter,



1934). There are still questions as definitions of entrepreneurs are limited by commerce shaped molds (McKenzie, Ugbah & Smothers, 2007). For example, Gartner (1989) argued for a definition that placed entrepreneurs as creators of new organizations. Other researchers have used this definition as well (e.g., Chrisman, Carsrud, DeCastro & Herron, 1990; Cooper, Tamachandran & Schoorman, 1997; Gatewood, Shaver & Gartner, 1995). McKenzie, et al. (2007) argued that this limits, and often alienates (Hentschke, 2009) entrepreneurs by definitions and role boundaries. For example, it may be interesting to consider if one were to take the entrepreneur out of the market place, could we better understand the motivations—the mind of an entrepreneur (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991)?

By simply looking at the entrepreneur through a market viewpoint, one cannot distinguish between unpredictable market changes (Hayek, 1945; Casson, 2005) and entrepreneurial phenomena. If only a small number of entrepreneurs are able to discover opportunity (Kirzner, 1973, pp. 66-67; Witzel, 2010) why are new business owners called entrepreneurs? If entrepreneurs are considered to be small business owners (Gartner, 1989), are they still considered entrepreneurs if their business fails (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991)? Some theorists ventured to distinguish entrepreneurs from capitalists (Knight, 1855-1972; Kirzner, 1973). Therefore, one could consider that not all successful business people are entrepreneurs—that there is indeed something inherently different about an entrepreneur (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991). Researchers have criticized Gartner's (1989) definition as being narrow (Katz, 1992; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996) and decontextualized (Bruyat & Julien, 2001; Reynolds, 1991); that fails to cover

entrepreneurship as a process that exists in a multi-dimensional framework of society, economics and political environments (Mackenzie, et al., 2007).

There is a growing articulation of the notion that there is a mindset that is unique to the entrepreneur (Gibb, 2009). In an attempt to better understand the mind of an entrepreneur, Gibb (2002a, 2007, 2009) urged researchers to look at entrepreneurial behaviour in and beyond new business ventures. Looking beyond the idea of new ventures “can be considered to have relevance to the individual as a consumer, family member and member of the community as well as worker, living in an increasingly globalized life-world of greater uncertainty and complexity” (Gibb, 2011, p. 148). Recent literature is explicit in its belief that unless people are in the beginning stages of the business, they tend to be labeled employees not entrepreneurs (Casson, 2005). Whether behaviour is considered a reaction to, or a disruption of the *status quo*, history consistently reminds us of the uniqueness of entrepreneurial behaviour. There remains a need to represent a wider ontological perspective than that which emerges from the historical business model of entrepreneurs.

Shane and Venkataraman’s (2000) idea of entrepreneurship was two-fold, including both “discovery” and “exploitation” (p. 217). Venkataraman (1997) argued that entrepreneurship not only requires opportunities but someone who is skilled at recognizing them. Accordingly, the field of entrepreneurship was considered “the scholarly examination of how, by whom, and with what effects opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated, and exploited” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 218). Defining entrepreneurship is difficult due the vast range of components within entrepreneurial behaviour as who and, for what reason it is studied (Lichtenstein, 2011; Hebert & Link, 1989).

Cuervo, Ribeiro and Roig (2007) argued, “entrepreneurship is the function by

which growth is achieved” (p. 161). They see entrepreneurs working in all aspects of our society and not just in the business sector. McKenzie et al. (2007, p. 5), presented the definition "entrepreneurship involves individuals and groups of individuals seeking and exploiting economic opportunity," as a way of including both the actor and the action. Stevenson proffered a definition that neither limits nor restricts one from being an entrepreneur, nor does only include those who have business interests. The definition that this study most closely aligns with comes from the work of Howard Stevenson (1983) who simply defines entrepreneurship as “a process by which individuals... pursue opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control” (p. 384). Definitions serve as a guide when one considers the varying ideas, thought and experience that colors an understanding of entrepreneurship.

### **Extant models of entrepreneurship.**

There have been many attempts to look for common denominators that seem to exist amongst the diverse scholarship on entrepreneurship (Moroz & Hindle, 2012). There are many studies where researchers have attempted to develop an understanding of entrepreneurship with an emphasis on either practice or theory (e.g., Baumol, 1968; Bird, 1989; Chia, 1995; Gartner; 1989). I was interested in looking for researchers who have attempted to bring the thinking together; to begin finding similarities in what has been found and what is being written about entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. I will look at two such studies. By way of a conclusion to this chapter, I will review studies that look more closely at the social aspect of entrepreneurship (e.g., Austin, Stevenson & Weiskillern, 2006; Swanson & Zhang, 2010).

Moroz and Hindle (2012) considered 32 scholarly works that focused on entrepreneurial processes. From their work, only four studies converged on what the authors considered both generic (all entrepreneurs do it) and distinct (it is unique to entrepreneurs): Gartner (1989), Bruyat and Julien (2001), Sarasvathy (2008), and Shane (2003).

Gartner's (1988) work focused on the venture emergence and less on the entrepreneur. He defined entrepreneurship as "the creation of new businesses" (Gartner, 1988, p. 21). He argued that this simplified definition was in response to previous definitions that seemed to lead to the disagreement about the nature of entrepreneurship (Gartner, 1988). Through this definition, he limited the activity of entrepreneurship to what occurs up to and including the launch of a new venture (Gartner, 2001). Gartner (1988) deemed that ventures are the result of a combination of one's unique expertise, the fact that the venture stands alone, and the necessity of it to be profitable. While his work is simple and can clearly be defined, Moroz and Hindle (2012) criticized Gartner's (1988) definition for what they felt was his failure to consider new ventures that fail, or are abandoned for many reasons. According to Gartner, they would not be entrepreneurial.

Gartner (2001) also restricted entrepreneurship to commercial activity. Moroz and Hindle (2012) posited that the profit requirement ignores social opportunities where value cannot be measured monetarily, or where profit is not considered to be the sole motivator (e.g., Van de Ven, 1993; Aldrich, Rosen & Woodward, 1987). Moroz & Hindle (2012) also suggested that innovation, in Gartner's work, is successful based solely on profit versus the true innovative value of a new idea or project. Entrepreneurs are successful, in Gartner's (1989) model, when they are profitable. Homer-Dixon (2000) joined others

(e.g., Cuervo, Ribeiro & Roig, 2007; Bruyat & Julien, 2001) in the claim that the capacity to be entrepreneurial is paramount to solving social and political problems in our complex and interdependent polis.

Bruyat and Julien (2001) criticized Gartner's de-contextualization of entrepreneurship and argued that entrepreneurs are individuals who create business opportunities for the value the business brings rather than for the profit it procures. While they adopt Gartner's four dimensions (individuals, organization, process and environment), they do not limit entrepreneurship to new venture start-up and include non-profit as well as public sector opportunities in their theory of entrepreneurship. Moroz and Hindle (2012) argued that the weakness lies in the attempt to isolate the value in the innovation process, as well as determining the universality of the value (e.g., can it hurt someone else while it is good for another and still have value?). They also argued that a focus on the individual alone, fails to consider team efforts in innovation, and does not distinguish the entrepreneur from other management roles. Another criticism of both Gartner (1989) and Bruyat and Julien's (2001) work was the limitation that qualitative study places on the understanding of this phenomenon of entrepreneurship. McKenzie, et al. (2007) argued that the limitation that results from the use of survey and questionnaires restricts the expansion and understanding of the entrepreneur and this field of investigation.

Sarasvathy (2001) referred to the processes by which entrepreneurs make decisions—most specifically as these relates to what she refers to as causation (planned strategy) and effectuation (emergent strategies). Like Gartner, she emphasized the differences between entrepreneurs, but further argued that they are different from novice

and non-entrepreneurs due to the process of effectuation (Moroz & Hindle, 2012). To Sarasvathy (2001), effectuation referred to the processes of decision-making whereby entrepreneurs experiment, consider what they have to offer, and lose, personally as predictability (Chandler, DeTienne, McKelvie & Mumford, 2011). For Moroz and Hindle, (2012) effectuation fails to consider goal setting, purposeful planning and environmental factors that affect the entrepreneur including his or her perceptions, imagination and knowledge. While Sarasvathy's (2001) field study approach was successful in allowing her to gather valuable information from entrepreneurs themselves, it favored marketplace entrepreneurs by (a) choosing only participants who founders of largely profitable organizations (between \$200 million and \$6.5 billion); and (b) focusing their responses on "problems that occur in transforming an idea into a successful firm" (Sarasvathy, 2003, p. 205). However, Sarasvathy (2003) concluded that her experience of meeting with entrepreneurs in person convinced her that there is something different about them. She explained,

... there is indeed something that ties them together as a species—something in the language they use, the stories they tell, and the way they approach and handle problems and people. (p. 205)

She concluded by validating the appropriateness of listening to entrepreneurs' stories and probing into their thinking (Sarasvathy, 2003).

Similar to the profit focus of Sarasvathy's (2001) work, Shane (2003) posited that the uniqueness of entrepreneurs is their ability to seek new ways to exploit profitable (or valuable) opportunity. The focus is the creation of "a new means-end framework for recombining resources that the entrepreneur believes will yield a profit" (Shane, 2003, p. 18). While the entrepreneur has the unique ability to identify opportunity, Shane (2003)

looked at opportunity as independent of an individual rather than as a social construction based on what can be. Moroz and Hindle (2012) argued that the weakness of this model is in the subjectivity interpretation of what is considered to be new information within a discovery. They also posited that the distinctively entrepreneurial part of Shane's study—the discovery and evaluation of the opportunity—was given very little attention in his work.

The scholarly work on entrepreneurial cognitions, more recently, presented a look into how the use of entrepreneurial scripts (or mental maps) could support innovative thinking (Mitchell, Smith, Morse, Seawright, Peredo, & McKenzie, 2002). According to the authors, these knowledge structures are the “mental models” that entrepreneurs can use to “piece together previously unconnected information” (Mitchell, Busenitz, et al., 2002, p. 97). In doing so, one would be able to recognize and invent products, create services, and put together what is necessary to get their business going and growing.

They further contended that there are three cognitions that are key to creating any new venture: Arrangement of the resources, willingness or a commitment, and the ability or the skills to create what it is that one would consider. In the case of entrepreneurial cognitions, one must have the ability to combine these mental maps in order to make an idea a reality. The study of cognition is founded on a belief that entrepreneurs think differently than others yet suggested that these “scripts” are a result of a specific knowledge or thought pattern.

More recent work has been done to consider intuition as a construct of entrepreneurial research. Mitchell, Friga, and Mitchell (2005), and Mitchell and Shepherd (2010), set out to define the system that they believe already guided our understanding of

how entrepreneurs act, and believe they act: intuition. Their study was also founded on a belief that one's ability to act on intuition may, or may not, be innate. This study, *The Mind of an Entrepreneur*, is also grounded in the belief that by defining and more clearly situating our understanding of this unique ability, we will not only provide a better understanding of the construct itself, but we will move more rapidly toward a richer understanding of how to develop and teach entrepreneurs.

The term, entrepreneurial thinkers, became a natural fit for these participants as I listened to their stories and recognized the innovative way they thought. Definitions for entrepreneurial thinkers existed in popular writing sites, but fewer existed in research literature. An online dictionary referred to an entrepreneurial thinker as one who reflected the qualities that one would need to be a successful entrepreneur. It then referred back to the definition of entrepreneur as someone who “sets up businesses and business deals” (Cobuild Collins Dictionary). Frank (2014) argued that entrepreneurial thinking requires one to be relentlessly pursuing growth, displaying stamina, writing one's own rules, taking challenges without gambling, remaining disciplined without being distracted and, then, taking those skills to creating a profitable company around you. The author argued that entrepreneurial thinking could be easily learned and trained by getting one's mind to see products differently and by finding ways to improve them.

In their meta-analysis of extant literature on entrepreneurship, Botsaris and Vamvaka (2012) compared models of intention and entrepreneurial behaviour (Ajzen, 2002; Shapero & Sokol, 1982; and Krueger, Reilly & Carsrud, 2000). They concluded that there were three broad categories that represent the extant literature in this area:



“traits models, situational models and intention-based models of entrepreneurship” (p. 155).

Literature concerning traits models was most often polarized and controversial (e.g., Gartner, 1989, Rauch & Frese, 2007). Botsaris & Vamvaka (2012) argued that extant literature that rely on the entrepreneurial predictability based on the understanding of an individual, alone, have “small explanatory power and even smaller predictive validity” (p. 157). However, the authors posited that there are sufficient studies to consider the personality traits argument when predicting those who chose to be self-employed (Caliendo, Fossen & Kritikos, 2011) and understanding the entrepreneurial personality, as well as business creation and success (Reimers-Hild, King, Foster, Fritz, Waller & Wheeler, 2005; Rauch & Frese, 2007). More discussion on the specifics of traits research will be discussed below (see Framework 3, Traits and Personality). While researchers argue that individual personality traits alone are insufficient to predicting entrepreneurial activities, combinations of approaches, including traits, have been considered more effective (e.g., situational models).

From the research done in situational models, researchers argued that situational factors in combined with personality traits are truer predictors of entrepreneurial activity, especially as related to starting a new company (Lüthje & Fanke, 2003; Schwarz, Almer-Jarz & Wdowiak, 2006).

Situational factors in traits approaches of entrepreneurship research are characterized by the affect the economy, as well as the social, political and cultural state of one’s environment (Schwarz et al., 2006). Botsaris and Vamvaka (2012) also found that the environment included influences such as: time restrictions, difficulty levels, and

social pressures that stemmed from unemployment or family responsibilities. A number of studies identified the opportunity to be exposed to role models who were entrepreneurial as being a highly important situational influence (e.g., Zhao, Seibert, & Hills, 2005).

Shapero and Sokol (1982) argued that human behaviour is guided by inertia until such a time as the existence is blocked and the need to survive prompts actions that can often be seen as entrepreneurial. Push factors are considered negative things or circumstances that drive people to be entrepreneurial not necessarily because of choice but in an attempt to survive the experience (Gray, Foster & Howard, 2006; Orhan, 2005). Pull factors, on the other hand, are the attractants that draw people into entrepreneurial activities based on potential opportunities (Orhan, 2005). These push/pull classifications can be actions that result from a situation or experience where one must solve interim needs, or the result of a push from customers, colleagues or others (Botsaris & Vamvaka, 2012). According to some, they can also come from taking over family business, personal desires such as wealth, independence, a certain status, or even a social conscience (e.g., Solymossy, 1997; Orhan, 2005; Gray et al., 2006).

Guzmán and Santos (2001) further refined these concepts by defining the situational factors that are essential to the behaviour of entrepreneurs. The others agreed that in addition to personal characteristics, one's social environment in conjunction with the institutional and political environment is essential to stimulating entrepreneurial behaviour (Audretsch, 2002; Santos-Cumplido & Liñán, 2007). Included in their model were the two factors of motivation and energy (Guzmán & Santos, 2001). In addition to environmental factors (social, political, cultural, institutional and productive) that often

account for abilities and attitudes, entrepreneurs are also affected by personal factors (training/education, experience and family) and provide information and opportunities (Guzmán & Santos, 2001).

Botsaris and Vamvaka (2012) considered authors whose models would be considered intention-based. According to Boyd and Vozikis (1994), entrepreneurial intention is considered “the state of mind that directs and guides the actions of the entrepreneur toward the development and implementation of the business concept” (p. 64). Many scholars argue that entrepreneurial behaviour is a conscious intention toward venture starting and guides every part of the decision to be self-employed, as well as every aspect of the planning and implementation (e.g., Bird, 1989; Ajzen, 2002; Krueger et al., 2000).

Krueger et al. (2000) argued that attitudes are based on perception; in that sense they can be learned and adjusted depending on the situation and environment. This will be further considered in Framework #3: Learning. Because attitudes are more flexible, the author contended that this theory is more valuable to the consideration of entrepreneurial behaviour. In studies done by Kim and Hunter (1993), over 50% of the variance found in intentions, were due to attitudes. Similarly 30% of the actual behaviours resulted from the existence of intentions. Like the Shapero and Sokol (1982) model above, the Ajzen Model of Planned Behaviour is also an example of a study that has been considered as a way to frame entrepreneurial activity.

Ajzen’s (2002) studies of planned behaviour were built on three variables that are inherent in situations where behaviour is being considered: demographic (income, age, education, etc.), attitudinal (what one’s attitude is about the idea or plan), and personality

(traits or natural bent). The author argued that the Theory of Planned Behaviour suggested that favourable attitudes presented a greater perceived control, which fostered an intention that was more likely to promote the behaviour in question. Because the person feels like they have control over their behaviour, the more likely they are to act upon their intentions when the opportunity presents itself.

The Shapero Model is similar to Ajzen's study with the difference being that the former was specific to entrepreneurial behaviour (Sánchez, 2012). The model was designed to understand what happens at the point where an entrepreneur decides to exploit an opportunity (Kollmann & Kuckertz, 2006). The moment, called the trigger event, is when something happens that disrupts what is normal and forces a person to look at new ideas (Shapero & Sokol 1982). In order to act on intention, Shapero (1982) argued that one would build on the positive or negative sense of past experience to perceive its desirability, feasibility and possibility for action. As discussed earlier, intention to act is also socially and culturally driven. Different than feasibility, where one must consider resources available to accomplish the task for instance, one's perception of feasibility means that there is a belief in one's self enough to believe that they can personally accomplish the task (Kruger & Carsrud, 1993).

Included in the extant body of literature is a growing interest in what has been deemed social entrepreneurship. Austin, Stevenson and Wei-Skillern (2006) defined social entrepreneurship as an "innovative, social value creating activity that can occur within or across the nonprofit, business, or government sectors" (p. 2). Typically, social entrepreneurship occurs when business approaches and innovation is applied to help plural organizations earn more money (Childress, 2010; Sandler, 2010; Austin, et al.,

2006; Thompson, 2002). For example, it was argued that there is a need for a private sector entrepreneurial mindset to assist schools in reaching profit and educational goals. Hentschke (2009) voiced the concerns that educators have with allowing profit centered approaches to operate educational programs and schools.

There is a growing base of literature that supports the idea that social entrepreneurs put social transformation ahead of monetary wealth (e.g., Austin et al., 2006), though Boschee (2008) regarded only businesses that are self-sustaining as well, to be socially entrepreneurial.

Ventures that focus on changing society do so by providing services or goods to people in need (Swanson & Zhang, 2010; Michelini, 2012). This approach can resemble a social conscience within the corporate world, or mirror what Swanson and Zhang (2010) refer to as “social improvement entrepreneurial ventures” where social service is part of a business’ mission statement (p. 72). Social transformation entrepreneurial ventures, on the other hand, are businesses that not only include social service as part of their mission statement, but also take definitive action to explicitly make positive societal transformation their focus (Swanson & Zhang, 2010, p. 72). While definitions of social entrepreneurs are still as divided as those that represent the entrepreneur him/herself, Swanson and Zhang (2010) have attempted to provide a construct that can frame what we know about social entrepreneurship in an attempt to further detect patterns of distribution and increase our understanding of entrepreneurs and their organizations.

After considering an extant body of literature dealing with process models of entrepreneurship, I agreed with Moroz and Hindle (2012) that there needs to be a “harmonizing” over a “unifying” model of processes within entrepreneurship (p. 812). It

is important to note that the authors concluded, “that no extant model of entrepreneurial process passed the test of being both generic (covering a broad array of entrepreneurial contexts and activities) and distinct (genuinely focused on activities that could be demonstrated to be uniquely the province of entrepreneurship as distinct from any other process)” (p. 808). They found that there were more differences in the models, than similarities. From their work, four competing perspectives of entrepreneurial processes emerged: “the emergence perspective” where emerging entrepreneurial process are measured by whether they are able to form a venture of some kind; “the value creation perspective” where economic theory underpins the creation but fails to provide a distinctive difference between management and entrepreneurship; and “the creative process perspective and the opportunity perspective” are opposites and both compete with the other processes in their focus on creativity versus organization, as well as the belief in personal opportunity over the emergence of processes (p. 810).

Moroz and Hindle (2012) concluded that there were some significant similarities in the models that brought a clearer sense of what the core of entrepreneurship could look like. They concluded that the relationship between the person and opportunity was crucial and that not everyone could recognize opportunity. They also noted that in each study there was the recognition of the disruptive or transformative nature of entrepreneurial activity. There was also an agreement that entrepreneurial activity created new value rather than simply optimizing old business models. And lastly the authors recognized that acting in a timely matter in a contextual setting was crucial to each model and to entrepreneurial success.

The aim of Swanson and Zhang's (2010) study was to build a framework by which the activities of social entrepreneurs could be further studied and understood. It is with the same urgency that we further the understanding of the entrepreneur, him/herself. Van Maanen (1995) stated that it is well to listen to the "polyphonic voices that comprise our highly diverse field" with the goal of learning from one another "such that our ink-on-a-page theories and consequent understandings of organizations can be improved" (p. 139).

In a more recent study, Sánchez (2012) furthered the work on entrepreneurial intention by considering "arrangements, willingness, and ability scripts" as possible deterrents to intention (p. 37). Some argued that risk perception may effect one's ability to believe their ability script as risk for one may not feel like risk for another (Simon, Houghton & Aquino, 2000). The propensity toward risk is among the most common attributes of an entrepreneur.

### **Perception of risk for entrepreneurs.**

The construct of risk was considered a psychological term because it is something that is perceived (Wilpert, 1995). Risk was described as a combination of both the probability, and the magnitude, of perceived loss in the pursuit of any venture (Morris, et. al., 2011). Earlier research discounted the risk-taking propensity of entrepreneurs as either being a part of the entrepreneurial decision or the success of what they seek (Brockhaus, 1982). Later studies have argued the contrary (e.g., Stevenson, 1989; Morris, et al., 2011).

One could argue that for entrepreneurs, risk-taking could align with the need to make quicker decisions with possibly more incomplete information; more often driven to

opportunity that lies within uncertain markets (Stevenson, 1989). Others may see entrepreneurs as risk-takers as they consciously recognize the need to be able to shift their plans, modify, adapt, and create back-ups as risk becomes greater (Morris, et al., 2011). In their study of entrepreneurs, Morris, et al. (2011) argued that “learning and affective outcomes” were what directly effect choices made by entrepreneurs and their perception of risk (p. 26). More specifically, Johannisson (1998) posited that learning from other experiences, gives an entrepreneur a capacity that appears, or even becomes, intuitive. Bandura’s (1986) argument placed learning about oneself as key to ones perception of risk. What a person comes to understand about their own abilities, needs and what they value, will translate into how they view things like risk, stress, leadership and ambiguity. In addition, Baron’s (2008) studies on arousal have shown that one who experiences high arousal (or increased drive) may be more willing to take risks than in situations where entrepreneurs are less aroused. Morris et al. (2011) argued that high arousal would increase an entrepreneur’s propensity toward risk, as well.

Bird (1989) suggested that entrepreneurs tolerate risk in relation to their prediction of how that risk will affect the success or failure of a particular venture more than the fact that they have a particular affinity to risk in itself. York and Venkataraman 2010, in their exploration of entrepreneurs and their ability to find solutions to environmental issues say, “the greater the uncertainty, the higher the opportunity for innovations” (p. 461).

### **Summary of Framework Two**

In this framework a description of entrepreneurial theory was presented. I chose to look at key theorists whose work more closely aligns with the focus of this study in spite



of the knowledge that there were many historical influences. Next I looked at theories as these related to entrepreneurial opportunity, and then how theory has influenced the definitions of entrepreneurship. Then, I offered a brief look at some of the scholarship on entrepreneurship and the critical thought that has emerged through these extant models. Finally, I summarized some of the theoretical work as related to the perception of risk in entrepreneurial activity.

### **Framework Three: Trends and Debates**

In this framework, I present literature that has addressed trends and debates. These issues include a look at trait and personality perspectives, nature versus nurture arguments and lastly the conflict surrounding entrepreneurial roles.

There was an apparent a synchronicity between popular beliefs of entrepreneurial talent, economic theory and existing empirical research (Gartner, 1989; Reynolds, 2000; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Popular views often hailed entrepreneurs as superheroes of economics, with characteristics that defy basic human abilities in the marketplace. On the other hand, researchers such as Hentschke (2009) argued that entrepreneurs have been scoffed at by many social sectors, including education.

#### **Traits or personality perspectives.**

Personality traits can be defined as “enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and oneself that are exhibited in a wide range of social and personal contexts” (APA, 2000, p. 686). Identifying specific traits in people was considered to be a good predictor of entrepreneurial potential (Izquierdo & Buelens, 2008).

From the literature, traits that emerged consisted of entrepreneurial predictors such as: self-achievement, initiative, innovators, pro-actors, risk takers, those who have a strong locus of control, energy, motivation, etc. (e.g., Caliendo, Fossen, & Kritikos, 2011; Wood, 2009; Raposo, Ferreira, Paço, & Rodrigues, 2008). From this list, three personality traits were most commonly attributed to the entrepreneur: strong internal locus of control, self-achievement, and a propensity for risk taking (Caliendo, Fossen & Kritikos, 2011).

Morris et al. (2010) described an entrepreneur as one who participates in reality formation. They argued that, "It is through the lens of his or her experience that the entrepreneur interprets life events and constructs a sense of self" (p. 28). Melding what the mind sees as a gap between past experience, good and bad, and the present situation at hand, Chia (1995) argued that the entrepreneur trusts, and acts on, what could be. In doing so, he or she is not just replicating the past but creating a future (Morris et al., 2010). Whether from gathered experience, inborn talents, or the ability to use past knowledge effectively, much time and effort has been spent trying to determine what these innate characteristics might be and how they are developed (Brandstätter, 1997).

Researchers have also associated personality characteristics such as: values (honesty, ethics, responsibility), risk-taking and drive to achieve with entrepreneurs (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991). In the attempt to better understand the entrepreneur, "some writers have identified entrepreneurship with the function of uncertainty-bearing, others with the coordination of productive resources, others with the introduction of innovation, and still others with the provision of capital" (Hoselitz, 1951). According to

these researchers, values including personal ethics, a propensity towards risk, and achievement are the most common personality characteristics of entrepreneurs.

The idea that entrepreneurs have specific abilities was aligned with some of the early thinkers such as Cantillon (1931); Knight (1921); Schumpeter (1934) and Kirzner (1979). Cantillon (1931) saw the entrepreneur as a risk-bearer; Knight (1921) saw the entrepreneur as a person possessing an alertness to opportunity that others missed; Schumpeter (1934) identified entrepreneurs as having an ability to disrupt and upset the norm; and Kirzner (1979) saw them as those unique few persons who have an intuitive sense of values. Within these traditions there was a tendency to characterize entrepreneurs through one dominant trait, though different; they are still most often associated with the market place. No matter what the entrepreneur's signature trait, there was an understanding that this distinguished group would be the ones who identify market opportunities and create new ideas, thereby increasing their own profit share.

In the early 80s, there was a resurgence of interest in identifying entrepreneurial traits and a rethinking of some of the previous theories on entrepreneurial ability. The research emerging from this era led to the use of more analytical models where bundles of traits would identify the degree to which a person would be considered to be entrepreneurial or not (McClelland, 1961).

More modern models consider traits as they enhance profitability; therefore, people who may be innovative, for example, but are not profitable are not necessarily considered entrepreneurial (Wennekers & Thurik, 1999). The assumption here was that you were either an entrepreneur or you were not (Lucas, 1978).

On the other hand, if entrepreneurs are defined by their characteristics, then it is hard to understand how one assigns meaning to experiences (Morris, Kuratko, Schindehutte & Allen, 2007, p. 28). As argued by Deleuze (1994) and Chia (1995), meaning is constructed through sense making as knowledge constructed by cognition, emotions and physiologically guided reactions to one's experiences. Based on the information constructed about one's own abilities and the action needed an entrepreneur will determine what he or she would do. This was referred to as the entrepreneurial mindset (Morris et al., 2011; McGrath & McMillan, 2000). Entrepreneurs have an alertness that allows them to adapt and react when conditions are uncertain (Ireland, Hitt, & Simon, 2003). This alertness, according to Morris et al. (2011), was seen as being cultivated by the environment and by the way one reacted to the experiences of the environment. This alertness also helped a person to recognize new opportunities with a disciplined and focused sense of how to leverage internal and external resources (McGrath & McMillan, 2000).

Some studies showed that predicting entrepreneurial prowess only from characteristics or personality traits had small explanatory power and predictive validity in the determining of entrepreneurs (Krueger, Reilly & Carsrud, 2000). On the other hand, recent researchers believe that personality traits do have potential, and are critical, to help us understand the development of entrepreneurs (Caliendo, et al., 2011; Reimers-Hild, King, Foster, Fritz, Waller & Wheeler, 2005).

In a meta-analysis of business owners and their personality traits as these were related to success in business creation, researchers found that there were traits consistent with those persons who created businesses and these also correlated with the success of

those business start-ups. Based on their findings, Rauch and Frese (2007) argued that studies that considered specific traits should be part of the progressive work of entrepreneurial research. In this study, Rauch and Frese (2007) concluded that entrepreneurial traits that were most apparent were: need for achievement and self-efficacy, an ability to be innovative, proactive and could tolerate stress, and that they needed to be self-directed. Recognizing that there may be something different within the nature of an entrepreneur that advantages him or her over another, and that one could be born with these traits, is central to the nature versus nurture debate.

### **Nature versus nurture perspectives.**

Earlier, we looked at researchers who argued that there was a difference between those who were entrepreneurial and those who were not (Morris et al., 2011; McGrath & McMillan, 2000). There is a perspective that an entrepreneur has traits, or behaviours, which are perhaps instinctual (Morris et al., 2011, p. 28). If one can identify these differences, then the question of how does one gain these behaviours becomes an important consideration and a source of differences of opinion. Some have made cases for the idea that the behaviour of entrepreneur is born in a person the same as a person's vocational interests (Betsworth, Bouchard, Cooper, Grotevant, Hansen, Scarr & Weinberg, 1994) or work values (Keller, Bouchard, Arvey, Segal & Dawes, 1992).

In a study on genetics, done by Nicolaou, Shane, Cherkas, Hunkin and Spector (2008), the researchers studied 857 pairs of same-sex dizygotic (non-identical) twins from the United Kingdom in an attempt to estimate the genetic (meaning factors which are encoded in one's DNA) influences that might be consistent in one who has a propensity toward entrepreneurial activity. Their study showed that "genetic factors

influence the tendency to become an entrepreneur” (p. 173) as related to being self-employed, owner operators and venture starters. From this study, Nicolaou et al. (2008) argued “genetic factors make some people more likely than others to become entrepreneurs” (p. 173).

Morris et al. (2011) argued that the entrepreneur is an active player in each experience that draws and “interprets life events and constructs as sense of self” (p. 28). They argued that even if we were to consider that entrepreneurs have specific traits they did not necessarily begin with them but have become adaptable through exposure to conditions that forced the entrepreneur to adapt, cope and survive both positive and negative situations (Morris et al., 2011; Beal, Weiss, Barros & MacDermid, 2005; McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). Morris et al. (2011) argued that it is in assigning meaning to one’s experience and acting on the present while the mind accounts for “past experiences, goals and aspirations”(p. 29) while analyzing the possibilities that lie within the gap. In doing so, the entrepreneur becomes a creator of possibilities rather than one who simply repeats what has been done before. Johannisson (1998) argued that an entrepreneur is able to move cumulative past experience and build an intuitive capacity that becomes their playbook when facing new decisions. Mitchell et al. (2007) went as far as to say that these experiences form schema, which maps behaviour and appears to be one’s nature.

Research by Acs and Audretsch (2005) suggested that an “entrepreneurial individual [is] an individual level phenomenon which occurs over time” (p. 13). Schumpeter’s (1912) theory of economic development rested success firmly upon the belief that the entrepreneur’s “... intuition and the capacity of seeing things in a way

which afterwards proves to be true, even though it cannot be established at the moment, and of grasping the essential fact, discarding the inessential, even though one can give no account of the principles by which it is done” (p. 85). Gloria-Palermo (2001) called this phenomenon an “energetic rationality...which originates in novel intuitions about future developments” (pp. 25-26). Researchers have argued the merits of entrepreneurial performance where the foundational piece is personal characteristics of the entrepreneur (Sandberg, 1987). In a study of corporate entrepreneurs, Marvel, Griffin, Hebda and Vojak (2007), concluded that it was “...their own intrinsic motivation that drove them to continue laboring on a project. Firm actions and structures could support that motivation or reduce it but could not create it” (p. 43).

### **The conflicting role of the entrepreneur.**

Entrepreneurial leadership was found to be a relatively new term outside of business literature. Values and beliefs, in the form of artifacts, reflect underlying assumptions based on limited or restricted knowledge. One such artifact is filtered through cultural lenses that can become a source of conflict in the acceptance of the role of entrepreneur as a leader within education.

From the sampling of literature, postings and popular leadership, an entrepreneurial leader was most often a person who focuses on profit, was a risk-taker, and was motivated by seeking the competitive edge (Gupta, MacMillan & Surie, 2004; Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991; Alvesson, 2002;). Gupta et al. (2004) defined entrepreneurial leadership as "leadership that creates visionary scenarios that are used to assemble and mobilize a supporting cast of participants who become committed by the

vision to the discovery and exploitation of strategic value creation... in a business environment” (p. 103).

Defining and understanding entrepreneurial leadership through one particular frame, such as business, results in a concentrated attention to certain meanings and themes that inform attitudes, limit understanding, and ultimately shape reactions (Alvesson, 2002). This was especially salient in research around education, limiting acceptance of an entrepreneurial leader within a school as one having conflicting values (Chubb, 2006).

In an educational study, Childress (2010) referred to social entrepreneurs as “idealists who are committed to solving social problems ... focused on education” (p. 1). Similarly, Childress defined an educational entrepreneur using these criteria and included “pattern-breaking social change” (Stevenson, 1999, p. 9). In this case, stakeholders were business leaders who helped establish funding and partnerships that transformed “the way the education system works through their collective efforts and influence” (Childress, 2010, p. 1). Chubb (2006) criticized this “radical and therefore controversial” approach and argued that business entrepreneurs are not only supporting schools but also taking them over (p. 281).

In this way, educators tend to distrust entrepreneurs and their for-profit organizations. Molnar (2001) argued that in some cases the underlying assumptions of educators of entrepreneurs were outright loathing and fear-driven. Yet Brown and Cornwall (2000) argued that with the growing number of charter and private schools and the vast size of homeschooling populations, educational leaders will be forced to develop new strategies for competing for students and funding in the educational marketplace.



Most common to entrepreneurial literature are educators who “convert their professional hobby and passion into their profession by forming a business” (p. 20). These educational entrepreneurs start a business with a focus on enhancing and improving learning (Leisey & Lavaroni, 2000; Kent, 1990). Leisey and Lavaroni (2000) argued that they are “adventurous risk-takers who were not afraid to put everything on the line.” In their study, the authors tracked educational entrepreneurs and their involvement in the creation of plural and profit educational businesses.

In a study by Cunningham and Lischeron, the authors argued that the literature on entrepreneurial leadership—especially in education—could be “fragmented and highly controversial” (p. 45). For example, few studies look at school principals as entrepreneurial leaders (Hentschke, 2009). School leaders have traditionally garnered characteristics such as: being stewards of public resources, being compliant to rules, practicing inclusive leading/learning, and political balancing (Hentschke, 2009). Initiative and risk were not considered or encouraged as good leadership practice. Missing from those definitions was the idea that a principal or an educational leader might also be an entrepreneurial leader with an equally driven passion to focus on student learning (Brown & Cornwall, 2000). According to the studies done by educational researchers, such as Hentschke (2009), the evolution of entrepreneurial leadership from business to education has left a void in the needed leadership practice and the praxis of traditional schooling. Hentschke indicated, “In our increasingly market-sensitive economy, public schooling enterprises are now also requiring [leaders with] entrepreneurial-like talents and skills” (2009, p. 148). Kourilsky and Hentschke (2003) argued that like entrepreneurs, school leaders need to recognize and act on opportunities, position resources to add value, take

risks, articulate vision, initiate projects and modify plans regularly in order to adapt to a rapidly changing environment.

Correspondingly, to be an entrepreneurial leader in an educational setting, Davies and Hentschke (2002) argued that a leader risks reputation and further job advancement. They observed, “there is little reward for taking entrepreneurial risks and succeeding, while there is significant personal and professional costs associated with taking such risks and failing” (p.11). As early as 1982, Sarason observed that when principals’ encountered resistance to their ideas, it was common to either “assert authority or withdraw from the fray” (p. 160). In addition, Lewin (1951) argued that it was principals’ ability to balance driving and restraining forces of societal influence that would determine their success at navigating or hindering new ideas and change. Leisey and Lavaroni (2000) argued that educational leaders who are entrepreneurs more often leave positions in public education in order to pursue a more entrepreneurial role.

### **Summary of Framework Three**

In the third framework I present a literature overview of current trends and debates that surround literature on entrepreneurs and their activity. First I offered the debate between the entrepreneurial trait and personality perspectives. Then I looked at the arguments that support both the nature and nurture perspectives of entrepreneurship. Lastly I looked at the conflicting entrepreneurial roles within the current literature.

### **Framework Four: Entrepreneurial Process**

In a meta-analysis of perspectives on entrepreneurship, Moroz and Hindle (2012) argued that there is a process of entrepreneurship that is both generic, in that all entrepreneurial activities include this, yet is also distinct or unique to only entrepreneurial

activity. For these researchers, the study of process “is at the epicenter of the debate on the nature of entrepreneurship” (Moroz & Hindle, 2012, p. 783). They defined process as “what [in this case] entrepreneurs actually do and how they do it” (p. 784). Jean Baptiste Say (1845) was one of the first to separate entrepreneurial profit from business profit and thus open doors for a richer understanding of the processes that have come to be considered entrepreneurial (Koolman, 1971). Literature that deals with the processes of entrepreneurship may be considered more closely by considering the role, the practice and the education of entrepreneurs.

### **The role of entrepreneurs.**

*The Oxford Canadian Dictionary* (2006) defined role as “a person’s... characteristic or expected function” (p. 881). Other sources place emphasis on the expectations of a particular behaviour pattern determined by one’s society or situation (Merriam-Webster, 2009, p. 562). The role of an entrepreneur would be consistent, positively or negatively, to the expectations and needs of his or her environment (Hindle, 2010). Schumpeter (1942) described the role of an entrepreneur as one who engages in innovative behaviour in a market system.

Entrepreneurs are identifiable and do not act randomly. McClelland (1961) argued that entrepreneurs have a particularly high need for achievement. They have been attributed with a high locus of control (Evans & Leighton, 1989). Entrepreneurs are often considered to be optimistic (Cooper, Woo & Dunkelberg, 1988), and have a high propensity toward risk-taking (Stewart & Roth, 2001). Other factors, such as education (Bates, 1995) and career and social status and experience (Aldrich, Rosen & Woodward, 1987) have been considered as contributing factors of entrepreneurial prowess. Krueger

and his associates (e.g., Krueger, Reilly & Carsrud, 2000; Krueger & Brazeal, 1994) responded to the need to re-considered determinants of entrepreneurial behaviour from traits to what they defined as an intention-based model (Hindle et al., 2009; Krueger et al., 2000).

Drawing upon Bandura's (1977) work on social learning theory, these researchers reconsidered entrepreneurial behaviour through the lens of this triadic structure in which behaviour, personal and environmental factors do not function separate from one another; instead, constantly influence and determine one another (Carillo, 2010). In Social learning theory, one's behaviour is learned both through observing others and interacting with the environment (Dimopoulou, 2012).

### **Entrepreneurial practice.**

The attitude surrounding the practice of entrepreneurs was duplicitous in that researchers carefully identified the role of the entrepreneur as value in the market place (i.e., Schumpeter, 1961) but at the same time feared its existence in the acrid grounds of noneconomic practice (e.g., education sector). The argument was flanked between the understanding of competition and profit. In looking at the literature, there is value in considering both.

Knight (2005) argued that uncertainty is the defining factor between entrepreneurial competition and the competition that exists in other economic situations. Economic uncertainty reflects capital and unskilled labour as the source of competitive advantage (Audretsch & Thurik, 2004). Entrepreneurial uncertainty rests on the knowledge or recognition of opportunity and an ability to act on uncertainty. According to Knight (2005) for entrepreneurs, uncertainty forces competitors to use critical

judgment to decide whether or not to engage in an activity or not. In this world of entrepreneurial uncertainty, success was finicky in that it could not be repeated or taught (Knight, 2005). He posited that if there were a formula for eliminating uncertainty there would be no need for entrepreneurs as there would no longer be a need for action resulting from uncertainty. Early human action traditionalist, Frederick von Hayek (1906-1992) argued that knowledge is not universal; some people have knowledge that others do not have because they recognize and act on signals in response of human action. If uncertainty can exist outside of profit centered business endeavours, it might open the possibilities that entrepreneurial practice can exist outside of profit and competition domains such as education.

### **Educating entrepreneurs.**

Current literature considers the process of educating and practicing to be vitally important as evidenced by the rapid increase in funding for and the creation of entrepreneurial programs in universities, colleges and business schools (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991). This increase directly reflects a growing belief that entrepreneurs are a valuable engine for economic growth and development (Bridge & McGowan, 2007). Zhao (2012) argued “Current students need to be able to compete in an intelligent, highly creative marketplace...a well prepares citizen of the future needs to be creative, entrepreneurial, and globally competent” (p.15). This added to the perception that increased attention on entrepreneurial education might reflect positively in economic advancement (Matlay, 2008) and there were those who argued that there was a desired correlation between education and entrepreneurial performance (Dickson, Solomon & Weaver, 2008). Zhao (2012) further purported that “Entrepreneurs, in a broad sense, are

not only a selected few. Everyone needs to be entrepreneurial in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (p. 8).

Wagner (2012) contended “the classroom experience at every level is essential to develop the capacities of young people to become innovators (p. 202).

On the other hand, Charney and Libecap (2003) argued that there was no evidence to support that someone can be taught to be an entrepreneur. Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) also joined a growing number of researchers who argue that entrepreneurship cannot be taught in school. These authors contended that:

Much of the entrepreneur’s ability relates to a personality or style of behaviour, which develops over time, primarily through relationships with parents and teachers early in life. Values and ideals, fostered in ones’ family, school, church, community, and even culture, stay with the individual and guide him or her for a lifetime. These values are learned and internalized, and reflect the process of socialization into a culture. Personal values are basic to the way and individual behaves and will be expresses regardless of the situation. (p. 49)

Kruger et al. (2000) posited that attitudes, rather than personality, drive entrepreneurial action, and contended that attitudes are learned based on one’s situation and environment. From this viewpoint, providing the appropriate environment is vital to increasing entrepreneurial talent. In addition, there was little research that actually linked entrepreneurs to their level of education, or that education level actually increased the likelihood that one might become entrepreneurial (Parker, 2005). Parker (2005) argued that one must question how risk taking, or motivation can be taught and argued that we cannot teach this “complex and heterogeneous phenomenon” (p. 169).

On the other hand, Kuratko (2003) joined other researchers in the belief that entrepreneurs are made not born. He argued that there are parts of what the entrepreneur does that can be taught. Solomon (2007) identified key elements, such as exposure to entrepreneurs, developing business plans and personal experience as ways of educating

entrepreneurs. Gibb (2002b) argued that educating entrepreneurs “demands exploration, in-depth, of the precise pedagogical means by which various entrepreneurial behaviours might be practiced, associated skills and attributes developed and empathy created” (p. 148).

Entrepreneurial programs exist in many universities, colleges and their business schools (Shane, 2003). A problem exists as we consider what should be taught and how (Gibb, 2002b). Much of what is being taught in entrepreneurship training aligns to business concepts with a focus on how to start a business venture (Gibb, 2002; Gibb, 2011; Pittaway & Cope, 2007). Further, Hynes (1996) suggested that there was a need for interdisciplinary training in entrepreneurship to non-business students who are often the originators of the ideas but do not have the background in business to develop it. In addition, there was a lack of evidence to support that idea that one could be trained to be entrepreneurial, separate from a natural ability where one was drawn to these programs because of an entrepreneurial bent; or, where business and leadership skills, on their own, have provided the where-with-all for success.

How entrepreneurs learn may be as illusive as how they think. There was support for the idea that innovation and creativity were linked. In a blog, Yura Bryant (2012) argued that we are all born with the ability to be innovative and creative; that our conformist philosophy of authority has directed how we teach and how we raise our children rendering them afraid to pursue their own path. Robinson (2001) argued that educational institutions actually force children to abandon their creative abilities for what is correct by stigmatizing being wrong and reinforcing the belief that mistakes should be

punished. He suggested that educators should educate the whole being and not just the mind.

Like the entrepreneur him/herself, it was considered hard to teach something that we know little about, or as teachers, may never have experienced (Pittaway & Cope, 2007). Ultimately, from a review of the literature, it may be deduced that a clearer sense of who the entrepreneur is, and how they think, may increase our understanding of entrepreneurs and aid in both theory development and education; especially in the plural and education sectors (Matlay, 2008).

Included in this argument is a need to consider how we develop entrepreneurial school leaders and principals. Sarason (1982) argued that being an effective teacher in its self was not necessarily the best preparation for being an effective principal. It is this “narrowness of preparation, and the demands for maintaining or restoring stability [that] encourage principals to play it safe” (p. 160). Sarason also recognized that schools are based on a “system...frequently conceived by the individual in a way that obscures, may times unwittingly, the range of possibilities available to him or her... [and] serves as a basis for inaction and rigidity” (p. 164). The anticipation of getting in trouble restricts creative and innovative thinking. Patterson, Purkey & Parker (1986) recognized competing goals, distributed power and decision-making, public influence, and teaching processes, all as deterrents to entrepreneurial thinking at a school leadership level. Fullan (1997) argued that principals cannot respond to opportunity in a system where they are not able to help develop or understand. In addition, according to Evans (1996), leadership theory most often begins outside of education—in the business world—and often applied (and misapplied) to education after it runs its course and is no longer valid. Fullan (1997) argued that school leaders need to



also practice “fearlessness and other forms of risk-taking” embrace “diversity and resistance while empowering others...[and] build a vision in relation to both goals and change processes” (p. 27). For all of these reasons, it could be argued that schools are fundamentally less able to encourage innovative, and new thinking. Rather we more often reinforce learning as successful when a student has been able to retain what has been determined by curriculum objectives and divisional mandates.

### **Developing expectations.**

McGrath (2005) argued that the process we have come to most expect of entrepreneurs is that of economic change. Entrepreneurship literature suggested that there would always be an interest in the processes of how the old is lost and how the new is formed (Venkataraman, 1997; Schoonhoven & Romanelli, 2001). There will always be an expectation that greater numbers will engage in what we see as innovative practice (Drucker, 1985; Acs & Audretsch, 2005). We live in a society that will continue to function on the expectation that entrepreneurs will not fail to recognize opportunity (Hayek; 1945). The contribution we will expect from entrepreneurs will be their willingness to risk (Knight, 1921; Gifford, 2005).

Moroz and Hindle (2012) argued that we must move to a more unified understanding of entrepreneurship in order to develop “genuine philosophical integrity” as a research field (p. 812). There is a need to further understand how an entrepreneur thinks (Krueger, 2007; Shepherd & Douglas, 1997), how they can be encouraged at an earlier point in their life (i.e., K-12) (Kent, 1990); their environment and environmental factors (Mitchell, Smith & Morse, 2002) that have influenced their movement toward entrepreneurial behaviour. There was an expressed renewal of interest in the individual

as agents of change (Audretsch, 1995) and the view that there needs to be “a community of scholars’ with similar interests so that entrepreneurship can “develop as a field of study” (Audretsch, p. 5). There is support for the idea that the process of educating is vitally important and is evidenced by the rapid increase in funding for the creation of entrepreneurial programs in universities, colleges and business schools (Kuratko, 2003).

From this review of the literature, it may be deduced that a clearer sense of who the entrepreneur is, and how they think, will increase our understanding of entrepreneurs and aid in theory and program development. So much of what has been published about entrepreneurs reflects either what they do (Childress, 2010; Leisey & Lavaroni, 2000), or their characteristics and traits (Zoltan & Audretsch, 2005, Kent, 1990) with the goal of creating templates of good ideas that are then transferred to other situations (Fullan, 1997, 2010; Leithwood, Harris & Strauss, 2010, Strauss, 2013). Fullan (1997) referred to the creation of how to templates as “useless” in that “complexities of postmodern environments are not amenable to single solutions” (p. 41). Fullan argued that those who explore their own change theories and find ways to test them against a sense of what would work and what would not are they themselves, opportunity thinkers (Fullan, 2010).

Classifying entrepreneurs, or listing traits and behaviours that are similar to entrepreneurs can lead to identification, but I would argue, that these options will not lead to a closer understanding of the mind of an entrepreneur (e.g., Collins, 2005). I agree with Van Maanen (1995) in that in order to more deeply understand the entrepreneur, researchers must listen to each other in such a way that a harmonizing effect will develop (Moroz & Hindle, 2012) and together lead us to a richer understanding of entrepreneurial behaviour, motivation and experience.

## **Summary of Framework Four**

In the last framework I have considered literature that looks at the processes of entrepreneurship. After defining process, I looked at studies done regarding the process or role of entrepreneurs. Next, I considered process as it relates to entrepreneurial practice and then the process of educating entrepreneurs. I concluded with a summary of the process of developing expectations.

## **Summary of The Review of Related Literature**

In some ways, this chapter reminds me of an oil portrait that I decided to paint of my son when he was three months old. I started from a small snapshot that was so much like him in every way. Each day, as I was emerged fully in his world, the child was changing—unlike the photograph I was using to capture his essence. Then I realized that I had been changing the painting, ever so slightly, to fit what was new; an image of his rapid metamorphosis of growth. The face, as it emerged from the canvas, was evolving into something that resembled someone different than the original snapshot I had chosen. I recognized that if I were to ever finish the picture, I would have to quit looking at what was new and constantly changing, and instead, pick a place in time that would represent his image on the canvas.

The field of entrepreneurship is rapidly changing, as is the need for researchers to make sense of this phenomenon. This makes the work of capturing what is current in the literature quite complex. I had to make a conscious effort to determine the snapshot by which this chapter would evolve. The pattern that emerged, while it could be added to and changed on any given day, was the result of a decision to stop and paint a picture in a

particular time; one that would somehow be representative of the emerging literature surrounding the phenomenon of entrepreneurship.

I began the literature review with a look at some of the current discussions around the definitions of entrepreneur, entrepreneurial and entrepreneurship. I read current journal articles and books with intent to identify reoccurring themes within entrepreneurial literature, especially as it related to entrepreneurial activity outside the market place. The themes that emerged could be framed by a consideration of: (a) the impact of culture and environment on entrepreneurs, and the practice of entrepreneurship; (b) the consideration of theory and/or the lack of theory; (c) the trends and debates surrounding entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship; and (d) the current work on entrepreneurial processes.

I started with a look at the role that culture and environment plays in molding the expectations and attitudes toward entrepreneurship, its synonyms and guises, and then how opportunity is conceived. Next I considered entrepreneurial theory—first historically, then as it relates to opportunity. I considered emerging definitions and extant models of entrepreneurship, ending with a theoretical look at how entrepreneurs perceive risk. The next frame considered the trends and debates surrounding entrepreneurs, beginning with how that relates to the perception of entrepreneurial risk. A discussion surrounding traits and the nature versus nurture debates followed and concluded with the discussions regarding the role of entrepreneurs. Within final frame some of the work on entrepreneurial processes were identified beginning with role, practice, the education of entrepreneurs and then a final look at expectations as it relates to specific entrepreneurial processes.

There are some themes that consistently appear in the material that I have read:

(a) the study of the phenomenon of entrepreneurship is in its infancy; (b) the field is diverse and rapidly changing; and (b) entrepreneurship is worthy as a field of inquiry. I have no doubt that throughout the interviews, through the analyzing of the data, and especially as this study is summarized, unforeseeable snapshots will emerge to record the story of entrepreneurship and the richness of its emersion into adulthood.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN: METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH**

This qualitative research was designed to explore the minds (thinking) of selected entrepreneurs, who have had an influence in arenas that would be considered to be private, public and plural sectors. Through this exploration of their lived experiences, deeper understandings of this phenomenon together with direct and indirect insights with potential implications for education systems were garnered. Currently, much of the literature on entrepreneurship is framed in the business sector and is predominantly quantitative. There was a perceived need for qualitative research in the field of entrepreneurship and its potential connections and insights for education sector (Davidsson, 2004). The study of entrepreneurs, as a field of study, is relatively young “We have simply not had time enough yet to familiarize ourselves with all facets of this empirical phenomenon, or to exploratively develop all the theory we need,” Davidsson claimed (2004, p. 56). He also argued that qualitative research is ideal for capturing the process of entrepreneurship especially as it emerges in real life experience.

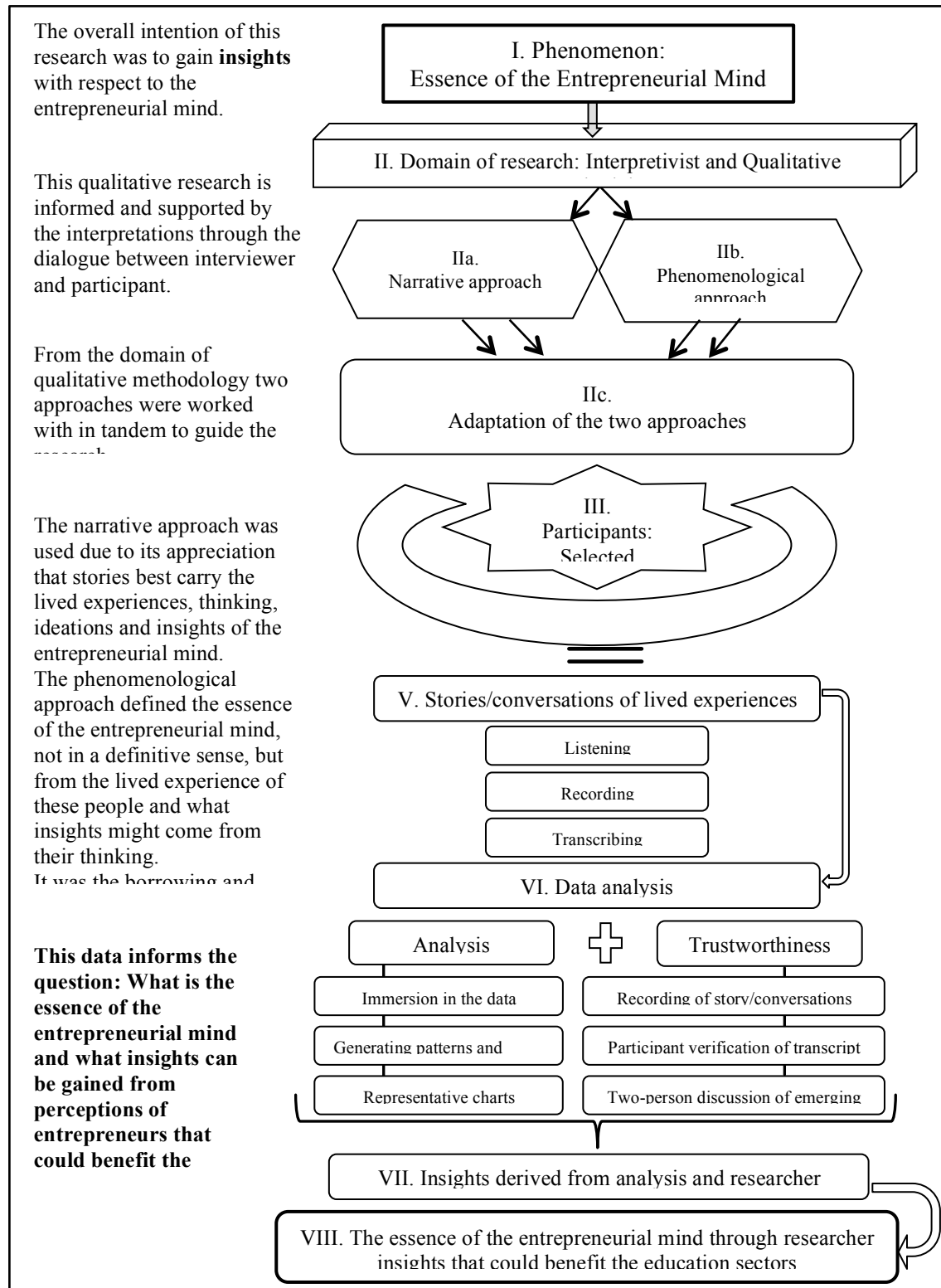
This was an interpretivist and qualitative study that drew from the various expressions of narrative and phenomenological approaches. The adaptation of these rendered the two approaches both compatible and helpful, as a means to achieve my research purpose.

In this chapter I introduce the research design through Figure 3.1, a visual representation of the logic of the study design. I address the methodology and the approaches that framed the study and how these informed the research. I outline how I chose the participants and describe the interview process. Next, I describe the patterns

that emerged from the data using participant quotes and stories. I describe the method and the approach I used to analyze the data and to develop insights from findings. I include a summary of themes from participating entrepreneurs, organized by the research questions and then present insights interpreted from these such as may urge us to explore more fully entrepreneurial thinking for the benefit of public, private and plural sectors, including education. Finally, I describe my use of Lincoln and Guba's (1985) evaluative criteria to establish trustworthiness: Credibility, dependability, and confirmability for this study and then describe the ethical considerations undertaken in the conduct of this research.

As indicated in Chapter One, the research question for this study is: What is the essence of the entrepreneurial mind and what insights can be gained from perceptions of entrepreneurs that could benefit the education sectors?

The following figure illustrates the logic of this study beginning with the phenomenon, the methodology (informed by adapting phenomenological and narrative approaches), the method (interviews), the steps of data analysis, trustworthiness, and the interpretative activity of gathering insights. I will refer to specific pieces of this figure throughout the chapter.



**Figure 3.1.** Depiction of the Logic of the Dissertation Research.



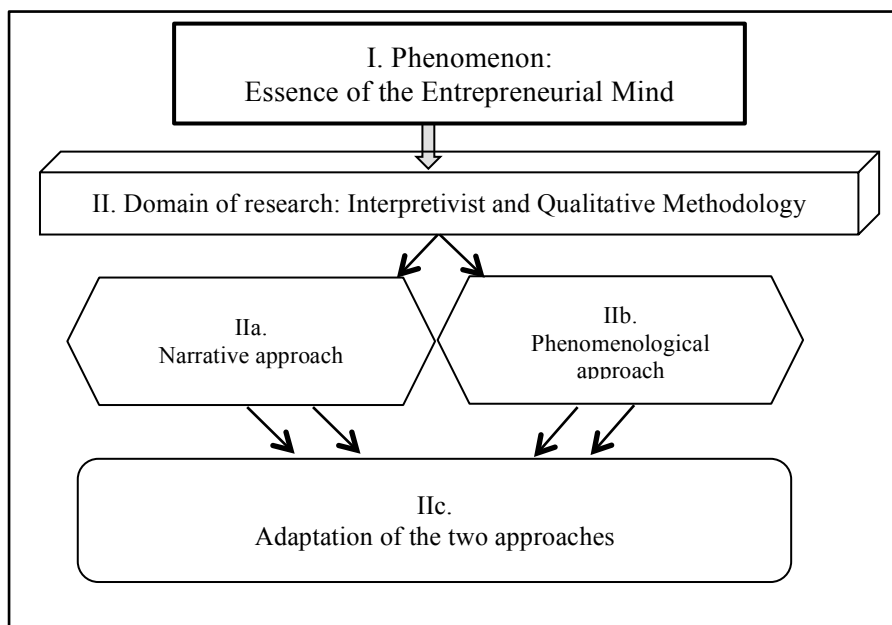
## **The Domain of This Research**

The overall intention of this research was to gain insights into the essence of the mind of an entrepreneur and was best served using a qualitative methodology.

Traditionally, entrepreneurial research has been highly descriptive—often relying on archival data procured by large structured surveys—and has been more often rooted in a positivist—more scientific approach—epistemology or way of studying (Neergaard & Ulhoi, 2007, Chandler & Ryan, 2001). Berglund (2007) argued that much of the energy associated with entrepreneurship is lost in the rigor of scientific methodology. Hindle (2004) argued that “unless entrepreneurship... begin[s] to embrace higher volumes of higher caliber qualitative research, the relevance and potency of the entrepreneurial canon will be severely compromised by a lack of the methodological variety that is so strongly displayed in other social sciences”(p. 577). Neergaard and Ulhoi (2007) described the phenomenon of entrepreneurship as being “too dynamic and complex to be captured by a single method. This is not advocating that ‘anything goes’ but should be seen as an encouragement of methodological pluralism and tolerance” (p. 4). There is a need for “qualitative methods such as case studies, in-depth interviews, direct observation and analysis”(Gartner & Birley, 2002, p. 388). Studies, such as Gartner’s (2001) research of the mind of a CEO, have used a qualitative methodology as dictated by the intent of the study. His was not to provide “hard, analytical data” but to gain “insights” as a result of what the participants were saying to him and “the thoughts they provoke” (p. 9).

The interpretivist, or constructionist, tradition informed this study in that there was a desire to establish an understanding of the participant’s life, experiences and subjective meanings that could influence their decision-making and actions.

I did not seek to measure or categorize participant behaviour or attitudes; instead, I focused on the understandings of the respondents and pursued an analysis based on my constructivist ontological position that we can actively negotiate meaning. Ontology is the study of the nature of reality. A constructivist ontological view is that one constructs reality by associating meaning with events and actions (Bryman, 2001). In this study, those actions and events are told through memories of meaningful life-events and stories. What we perceive as reality, exists as “constructions... in the minds of people...and can be studied only in wholistic, and idiosyncratic, fashion” (Guba & Lincoln, 1999). This research consisted of a qualitative study that focused on an interpretation of the thinking of a number of entrepreneurs in such a way that brought the phenomenon (the mind of the entrepreneur) to visible and clearly articulated place of description (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This study also relied on a collection of narrative, ideas, conversations and stories to beacon a deeper understanding of the essence of an entrepreneur. This abstract from the above diagram shows the logic of the methodology.



**Figure 3.1a.** Depiction of the Logic of the Methodology.

### **The Adaptation of Narrative and Phenomenological Approaches**

As indicated, I have framed my study using an adaptation of the existing narrative and phenomenological approaches that take on varied forms depending on their application. In his book, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, Creswell (2006) presented a comparative study of qualitative approaches. Within his comparison, he included descriptions of both the narrative and phenomenological approaches. In his discussion, he argued that each approach looks different depending on the particular mindset or ontological perspective they represent (e.g., “postmodern” Czarniawska, 2004; “human developmental perspective” Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004; “psychological approach” Leiblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998; “sociological approaches” Cortazzi, 1993; and “qualitative approaches” Riessman, 1993; Elliot, 2005, p. 53). For instance, citing the work of Daiute & Lightfoot (2004), Creswell argued that narrative methodologies have “many forms, uses a variety of analytic practices, and is rooted in different social and humanities disciplines” (p. 53).

In the last decade, narrative analysis has proven to be a recognized and worthy approach to research. This approach is characterized by its ability to be the catalyst for bringing together various disciplines and bridging gaps in traditional methods of research (Hanninen, 2004). For example, Hanninen (2004) argued “narrative research is like a huge buffet to which different disciplines bring their own methods and views for others to share” (p. 69). Yet, Hendry (2010) argued, it is the “questions,” not the method, that are the heart of research (p. 73).

Wandering, and perhaps getting lost, is key to the ongoing process of inquiry. How will scholars engage in dialogue with others if they stay within the comfortable confines of current paradigms? Resituating narrative as inquiry, as

an epistemology of doubt, has the potential to break down the barriers and walls that keep scholars from engaging in meaningful dialogues across differences. (p. 78)

The study was grounded in the researcher's belief that story telling (narrative) is a fundamental way that humans understand, begin to question, unearth doubt and bring some degree of understanding and meaning to the complex phenomenon (a way of acting or thinking) in their lives (Andrews, Squire & Tambokou, 2008; Josselson, 2006). Guba and Lincoln (1999) argued that narratives should be studied wholistically and in an idiosyncratic fashion because of the multiple realities that shape one's behaviour. Making sense of stories is one of the most difficult parts of approaching research narratives (Hanninen, 2004). "Told narrative" is more often an empirical phenomenon where the told story reflects a particular culture (Boyce, 1995; Steffen, 1997) or language (e.g. Prince, 1982) surrounding that culture (Hanninen, 2004, pg. 71). These same purposes can also be recognized using fictional stories. In a phenomenological approach to story telling, there is more interest in the stories as reflections of what is going on in their mind; their life meaning and identity, and how they understand those events (Crossley, 2000; McAdams, 1993; Hanninen, 2004). In contrast with empirical studies that look at words and replicative nature of told narrative, reflecting on life experience and life itself, through stories that are filtered through ones culture and language can be more difficult to articulate. Using a narrative approach in qualitative research aims at constructing an "endlessly creative" interpretation that is based on the writer's attempt to make sense of what has been told (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 14). When telling stories, we become the scribe of what was interpreted as meaningful in our lives. What is remembered may have

even greater meaning than the order in which it happened (Sarris, 1993; Carr, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly 2000).

A narrative approach was the means by which I could make sense of the lived experience of each participant story and then reflecting on the collection of the stories I could draw themes and insights. This approach carries an appreciation that stories are best represented in the lived experiences, the thinking, and the ideations, as well as the development of participant's mind and direct insights (e.g., Carr, 1986; Hanninen, 2004). The goal was to focus on the phenomenon as experienced by the participant in their stories and through their every day lived experiences. From there, one is able to see patterns and meanings of the phenomenon in an attempt to understand its essence (Berglund, 2007). I undertook this pattern-finding and insight-deriving approach for each individual interview as well as for the cumulative collection of stories. In this study, I drew from these meaning statements and retold these thematically and in the order of the research questions. Careful use of actual quotes and stories was to draw from the original espousals an essence of the participant's thinking, especially as it related to the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

I did not know, ahead of this research, whether or not entrepreneurs would tell me their stories. The experience was a little like looking closely at a song someone has written. The listener is not just critiquing the words and music, but she is critiquing the heart of the songwriter as well. There is a great deal of risk in this. For selected entrepreneurs there would be some risk in their telling their stories. In retrospect, what touched me the most while conducting this research was the degree of vulnerability that all participants displayed, and their willingness to risk, once more. I gathered written or verbal narratives that focused on the

meaning that participants had given a particular phenomenon in the telling of their stories. I listened to those stories in an attempt to recognize the possibility of hidden realities within those experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998). Narrative inquiry, itself, demands more than simple consideration of the story itself; it is a complex construction of richer, often unconscious understandings.

This was the researcher's approach and mindset, the driving force, both the epistemology and the ontology, in this journey towards understanding and reality. These considerations guided me to the place of choosing my methods. The use of a narrative approach informed the method of data collection that included interviewing and story telling. Information was gathered from participants using carefully conceived questions that drew information from the participants rather than directed their telling. These interview questions were framed in such a way that participant stories might readily emerge.

A narrative approach also supported the belief that the thematic analysis of the data could include immersion in the data, and generating categories and themes from patterns that emerged, irrespective of the number of participants who said it. Narrative research focuses on how stories are assembled by the participants and the meanings the participants place through order, and description (Riessman & Speedy, 2007). Narratives begin and end within the living reality of daily life. Creswell (2013) argued that one could only understand a person's reality by looking at the meaning that they give to their memories. From those stories I was able to build themes based on my own understanding of their meaning. Quotations and actual sentences were collected. I could see patterns in the statements collected; and from those patterns, emerging themes were linked together

(Bygrave, 2007). I witnessed what I interpreted to be the emergence of essence of the entrepreneur mind as experienced by these participants. I listened to those stories in an attempt to recognize the possibility of hidden realities within those experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998). For this study, entrepreneurs told their stories guided by specific questions that resulted in my garnering insights into their lives and experiences.

I have gathered insights into the nature of entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial mind as a result of what participant entrepreneurs have said to me, and through the thoughts that are provoked (e.g., Garten, 2001; Gosling & Mintzberg, 2003). In this study the meaning from the lived stories and insights of entrepreneurs were examined. This adapted narrative approach helped support the use of stories as a valuable platform for carrying the stories of lived experiences, the thinking behind what is remembered, and how it is remembered. This influenced the methods I chose to gather the data and the value in which the stories reflected the essence of their thinking and life sense making. The breadth, depth and complex nature of contemporary narrative inquiry offered me a new-found freedom to explore combinations of topics and interests with choices regarding the methods and approaches that are available (Chase, 2011).

There was an emphasis on the way things are understood made sense of and experienced in every day living at the core of this research (Berglund, 2007). Like entrepreneurship itself, phenomenology has its roots in different traditions. I used collected data and did an analysis without having to have experienced the phenomenon myself in order to have shared those essences. By adopting a version of phenomenology, I could be free to create an approach to this study that could capture and communicate meaning within the participants' experiences of everyday life. In a phenomenological

study, one does not exist simply in one's self, but rather through the meaning that society places on roles and their importance (Berglund, 2007). Berglund argued "The goal of phenomenological methods is to study the meanings of phenomena and human experiences in specific situations, and to try to capture and communicate these meanings in empathetic and lucid ways" (p. 76). Phenomenology is descriptive in that it lets the story be told; yet it is interpretive in that it reflects the affects of culture and social situation on a person's thinking (van Manen, 1997).

Phenomenological approaches vary and there are varied enactments of design and interpretation. According to von Eckartsberg (1986), phenomenological researchers find meaning in lived experiences and stories, and the meaning that is placed on them, and not just in numbers. Berglund (2007) argued that researchers who study entrepreneurs should enact research designs that return to the phenomenon itself, and bring to view the way entrepreneurs experience their world, how they make sense of those experiences, and how those experiences are acted out in everyday life. At the same time, there has been a movement away from the human science methods of phenomenology practice (Berglund, 2007). In looking at adapting phenomenology, I explored and defined the end of my research, which was to explore and better understand what the entrepreneurial mind was like. This was not in a definitive sense, but rather from the lived experience of the participants and considerate of what insights they might directly and indirectly offer from their stories.

This approach allowed me to gain insight into this phenomenon through the process of reflection, with the aim to inform and gain wisdom. It served as the backbone to the carefully considered questions and the way I constructed meaning from the



participants' stories. More specifically, through this approach I was able to draw meaning from the reflection and story-telling experiences of the participant. In doing so I was able to garner greater insight as to how an entrepreneur thinks and navigates his or her world as well as what motivates them to act (Carter & Little, 2007; Gris, 2002).

The purpose of Garten's (2001) study was "to reflect the most important thoughts that run through the minds of some of the world's leaders as a group. I was looking for patterns from which to draw conclusions, patterns from what was said and what wasn't" (p. 9). He named and interviewed "top businesspeople to see what they thought" (p. 10). For this research, my pursuit was to gain greater insight into the essence of mind of the entrepreneur. Simply stated: I too, wanted to know how these entrepreneurial men and women thought and what they were thinking, in order to provide useful descriptions and insights.

The study of entrepreneurs is a complex and dynamic one that is constantly in a state of flux resulting in the need for a variety of methodologies and theories (Neergaard & Ulhoi, 2007). Still, much of what Berglund (2007) called the "liveliness of entrepreneurship tends to be suspended in favour of 'scientific rigour'" (p. 75). There have been calls for researchers to enact research designs that return to the phenomenon itself, and bring to view the way entrepreneurship is experienced and the meaning evoked by it in everyday life (Berglund, 2007). Bygrave (2007) argued, "the heart of entrepreneurship process will be found in the 'descriptive background'" (p. 43). Additionally, there has been a call for research that focuses on "individual and decontextualized factors with investigations of emergence, interpretation and intersections of various kinds" (e.g., Busenitz et al., 1996; Berglund, 2007, p. 75). The

approaches that I have adapted to use to purpose this study are versions of narrative and phenomenology.

This narrative and phenomenological approach also gave me freedom to isolate a target population and create spaces for them to speak. I conducted purposeful conversations with selected entrepreneurs who were invited to discuss their perceptions and experiences with respect to their entrepreneurial mindsets, as well as to provide perspectives on how they see themselves and their contexts. Building on the belief that the entrepreneurial mind may be regarded as a complex phenomenon and that existing theories may fall short in attempting to unpack understanding, researchers such as Landstrom (2001, 2010), indicated that there is “a need to pose new questions and build concepts and models that better explain the phenomenon” (Landstrom & Benner, 2010, p. 20). It was my hope that looking at what this phenomenon might add to the richness of what we can learn about the essence of the entrepreneurial mind and garner insights such that could benefit the education sectors.

Combining the two adapted approaches gave opportunity for me to collect descriptions (narrative) and identify the essence of the phenomenon (phenomenology) to more deeply capture the thinking of the participant. Adapting a narrative and a phenomenological approach was an effective way to elicit meaning through stories and benefit this study as one that sought to explore the essence of the entrepreneurial mind. While methodology is the choice of an approach that directly informs the methods used to acquire knowledge (Grix, 2002), methods are the tools used to analyze and attain data (Carter & Little, 2007; Grix, 2002).

## **Approach to Data Collection and Analysis**

In this section, I describe the method of data collection and how these data were analyzed. Herein, I look at: the selection of participants, the interview processes, the data collection and analysis, and how this study demonstrated trustworthiness and accounted for ethical considerations.

### **Selection of Participants**

The method I have chosen for this qualitative study analysis was semi-structured interviews. Participants were entrepreneurial outliers, who were identifiably involved in public, private and/or plural sectors. Choosing outliers was important in that they contribute to the study a ‘next’ practice approach rather than simply looking at current understandings (Mohrman & Lawler, 2012). It also provided a broader view of a particular kind of entrepreneur that can result in “useful and impactful research” (Mohrman & Lawler, 2012, p. 443). For the purpose of this study, the participants were chosen due to their involvement in two or more of the sectors. According to Creswell (2013), participants should consist of those who have experienced the phenomenon. I chose participants who were identifiable through their published work and/or through their involvement as described above.

First, I found people who saw themselves, or are seen because of their writing or their activity, or they are viewed by other people as entrepreneurial and are involved in these multiple sectors (public, private and/or plural). If these people have been nominated, I then confirmed that they fit the criteria and could give insight into this phenomenon. Creswell (2009) argued that participants in a qualitative study are selected based on their ability to inform the research question and enhance the phenomenon of the study.

Sokolowski (2000) argued that in the study of a phenomenon, the identity of that phenomenon has modes of appearance and can be experienced differently by different people. There was a desire to identify a phenomenon that manifests itself in different people, such it was my goal to choose participants who were diverse in age, location and as much as possible, community/business involvement

I located and chose participants by using a hybrid model of Marshall (1996) and Bergs (2006) work on qualitative participant sampling. Marshall suggested three broad approaches for selecting a sample for qualitative studies: Convenience, judgment and theoretical sample. I adopted convenience and judgment only, as theoretical sampling was considered a good method for theory driven studies such a grounded theory (Berg, 2006). In doing so, I was able to select participants following a proven yet deliberate naturalistic process that consisted of convenience sampling judgment or purposeful sampling, and purposeful snowball sampling (Marshall, 1996; Berg, 2006).

Convenience sampling, according to Marshall (1996), involves the selection of the most accessible subjects. Throughout the study, I referred to the idea that I saw a different type of entrepreneur through our business and provincial involvements. There were people within our business circle that I had observed acting and thinking similarly to the target group. Because of family contacts and business, I had access to entrepreneurs who were involved in the automotive or marketing industry, primarily, but also in other market place arenas. I began my list of participants with those I had identified as I thought about this study. Out of those I was able to use in this study, only three participants could be considered to have any level of familiarity with the researcher. I had met them previously, and over the length of business acquaintance had

opportunities to talk over group meals on no more than three occasions. For that reason, selecting “accessible subjects” was part of convenience sampling (Marshall, 1996, p. 2). However, I was rigorous in following the criteria that I had established for all participants. Those who fit the criteria and who were accessible were approached for the study.

Second, participants were selected through a technique most often associated with qualitative studies: judgment (Marshall, 1995) or purposeful (Berg, 2006, Marshall, 1996) sampling. Judgment or purposive sampling requires the researcher to purposefully seek respondents who have experienced the phenomenon. Merriam (1998) deemed “purposive sampling is based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most” (p. 48). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that purposive sampling gives way for a full scope of issues to be explored. Marshall (1996) specified that this should involve developing a framework of variables to help identify potential participants. Using this process, I purposefully sought out participants who could respond to the research questions and who had experienced the phenomenon. This also guided my final choice of participants as I sought to find a “maximum variation sample” (Marshall, 1996, p. 6) of participants, based on diversity of geography, age and gender. In doing so, I deliberately sought participants who represented a cross section of geographic, age and gender differences. I chose participants from most of the Canadian provinces and included one participant who was living and studying in the United States. I was able to find qualified participants to allow for a range of age groupings from 18 to 90 years of age. While I attempted to bring to this study more of a gender balance, two of my female participants had to withdraw from the study. This purposeful selection process allowed me to “select

cases that show different perspectives on the problem, process or event ...to portray” (Creswell, 2013, p. 100).

Garten (2001) chose his participants by seeking out not just typical CEOs but chose what he considered to be the best. He referred to them as being “at the top of the pyramid” (p. 8). Garten explained:

From the resources they oversee to the pressures they face, they constitute an elite class, a distinct group worthy of observing. I am also aware that generalizing about leaders who are involved in a range of industries requires omitting a large number of important concerns that relate to specific companies. An investment bank faces different day-to-day opportunities than an automobile company. Nevertheless, there is no shortage of information on individual executives and their firms, and I want to complement what exists elsewhere by focusing on what they have in common. (p. 8)

This became his target group. Garten (2001) sought out specific people, as described above, who were elite in his estimation. Marshall and Rossman (2006) outlined the value and disadvantages of interviewing “elite” people to the phenomenon. They argued, “valuable information can be gained from these participants because of the positions they hold in social, political, financial, or administrative realms” (p. 105). I believe that finding participants that truly fit the description was important to this study. However, the byproduct of the type of entrepreneur I was looking for was that they could have been described as elite participants based on their accomplishments, as well as their work and community acumen.

Within judgment sample, Marshall (1995) suggested that snowball sampling is a worthy way of finding participants. Throughout the preparation and interview process, participants recommended colleagues who they believed fit the study; in some cases, I chose to invite these people to participate. Snowball sampling is most often used in

qualitative studies, where random samples enhance the quality of the findings (Berg, 2006). This qualitative study dictated that strict qualifications accompany each sampling approach in order to remain true to the experience of the particular phenomenon being studied and to answer the research question. Marshall (1995) argued against the use of snowball sampling in qualitative studies because the study sizes are smaller and the characteristics of the whole population should adhere to purpose of the study. I adopted a hybrid of snowball sampling that allowed me to actively consider, and pursue recommendations based on existing relationships within the participant group.

Each prospective interviewee was invited to take part in a semi-structured interview. Participants were contacted by various methods that included: phone, e-mail, letter, personal contact or any combination (see Appendix C). In the initial contact, I provided an explanation of who I am, the university I represented, how I had come to identify them as a possible participant, a description of the planned study and projected time frames.

After the initial contact, prospective participants were sent an introductory letter to further explain the study (see Appendix D). I followed up personally to discuss questions, and to set up interview time(s). I requested a minimum hour and a half interview time period. Additional time was requested as needed and if available. Thirteen entrepreneurs agreed to these requests. From the thirteen candidates I selected, I was able to meet and interview twelve people. In the end, only nine entrepreneurs were able to give final approval to their participation and use of transcripts. Of the thirteen, gaining access was difficult and in one case, we both agreed that our schedules would not coincide in time for the study. From those I interviewed, I was unable to gain final

transcript approval for one. The availability to interview one prospective participant was so limited, and the result would have held up the compilation of the material, so I chose not to use his interview in my study. Another participant had to withdraw for job related reasons. Ultimately, I was given permission to use the transcripts for the interviews of nine participants.

In some cases, I talked with participants, subsequent to interviews, to clarify or redefine ideas previously discussed. These were purposeful discussions that provided opportunity for me to ask further questions, clarify information and/or validate themes and insights. In these experiences, both the interviewer and the interviewee became participants in the reflection and collaboration (van Manen, 2001).

### **Interview Method**

The interviews were specifically designed to meet the purpose of this study. The questions served as a means by which each entrepreneur's experience might be described and whereby insights might be gathered to better understand the phenomenon (van Manen, 2001). All participants were interviewed and recorded, face-to-face, using semi-structured open-ended questions (see Appendix E).

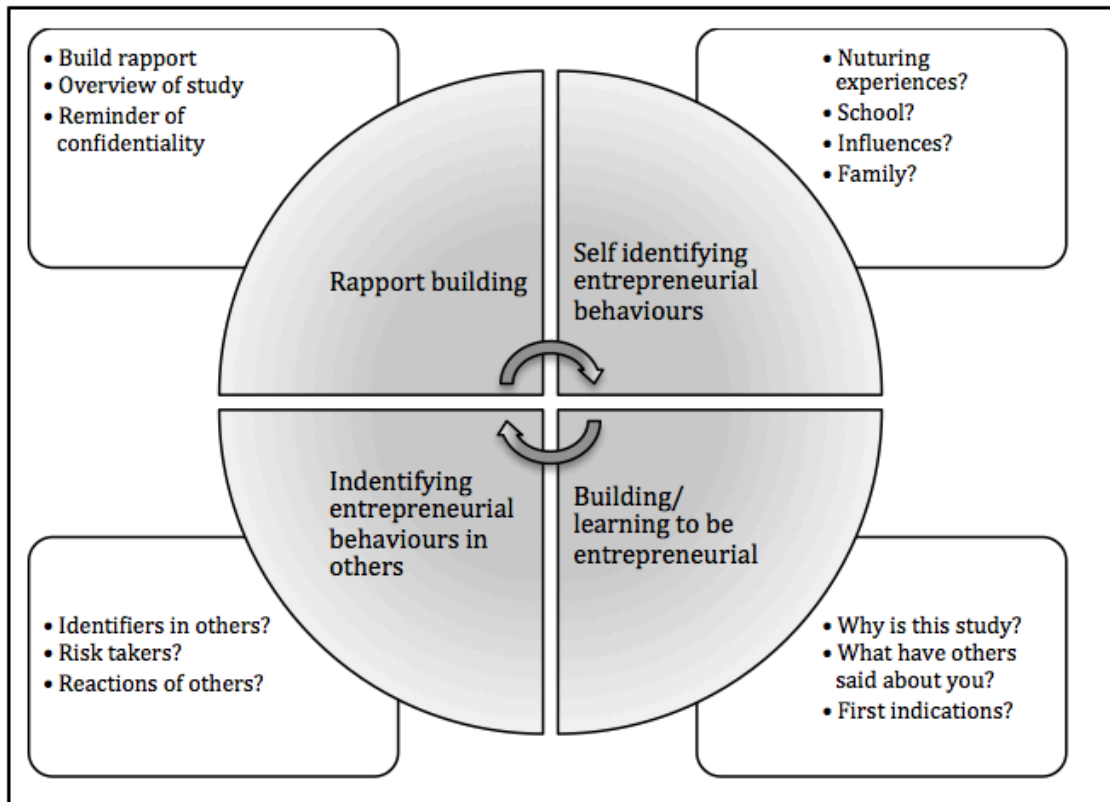
#### **Interview questions.**

Semi-structured interview questions, are “those organized around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth” (May, 1991, p. 191). They are open-ended inquiries that guide the storytelling without controlling it (Creswell, 2013; van Manen, 2001). Additional questions were driven from the emerging interview stories and unanticipated participant perspectives (van Manen, 2001). In each case, the aims of the questions were to provide a launching place for



additional prompts from the researcher and as a way to clarify, or drive deeper thinking, encourage further reflection and proffer richer, more thoughtful stories (Czarniawska, 2004). The intent of each question was to be “able to go on asking questions (i.e., the art of thinking),” as described by Gadamer (1975, p. 330). In this way, semi-structured interview questions were employed to best consider the participant’s perception of the phenomenon rather than a reflection of the interviewer’s goals (see Appendix E).

The questions were structured in such a way that I could guide the participant through a framework such that each element of the interview would emerge: rapport building, self-identifying entrepreneurial behaviours, building/learning to be entrepreneurial, and identifying entrepreneurial behaviours in others (see Figure 3.2.).



**Figure 3.2.** The Structure of the Interviews

### ***Rapport building.***

In an attempt to examine perceptions of a participant's thinking (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001), I intentionally asked questions that focused on building rapport. Using van Manen's (2001) work, this looked like a "conversational relation with others" that would attempt to establish a "common orientation to the notion or the phenomenon" that I was studying (p. 100). In each interview, I was attentive to the importance of setting a foundation of knowledge for myself and for the participant.

### ***Self-identifying entrepreneurial behaviours.***

Themes in phenomenological type approaches are better understood as we seek the "experiential structures" that make up a certain phenomenon (van Manen, 2001, p. 78). In this case, these structures (questions) attempted to move the experience of the participant through guiding storytelling and give insight into their understanding of the phenomenon. During the interview, participants were encouraged to reflect on their own perception of themselves as an entrepreneur. This rich commentary gave insight into the participant's cognitive experience and would later be the backdrop to better understand the reality of the "human condition" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 24).

### ***Building/learning to be entrepreneurial.***

Participants were asked to recall those who influenced them, or nurtured them toward being more entrepreneurial in their life. This focus gave participants an opportunity to dig more deeply into the how, why and what of their entrepreneurial beginnings (Moustakas, 1994). This focus caused participants to question their own understanding and assumptions of the phenomenon.

### ***Identifying entrepreneurial behaviours in others.***

A series of questions (see Appendix E) was aimed at drawing further description of participants' perceptions of the phenomenon. These questions became more specific in comparison to the more general approach at the onset of the interview (Moustakas, 1994). This approach was intended to give opportunity for the participant to draw comparisons to the stories already told and deepen their thinking on their self-spotlight by verbalizing what they saw in others who they believed to experience the same phenomenon. This was successful in that they were often more comfortable describing specific markers in others than in themselves.

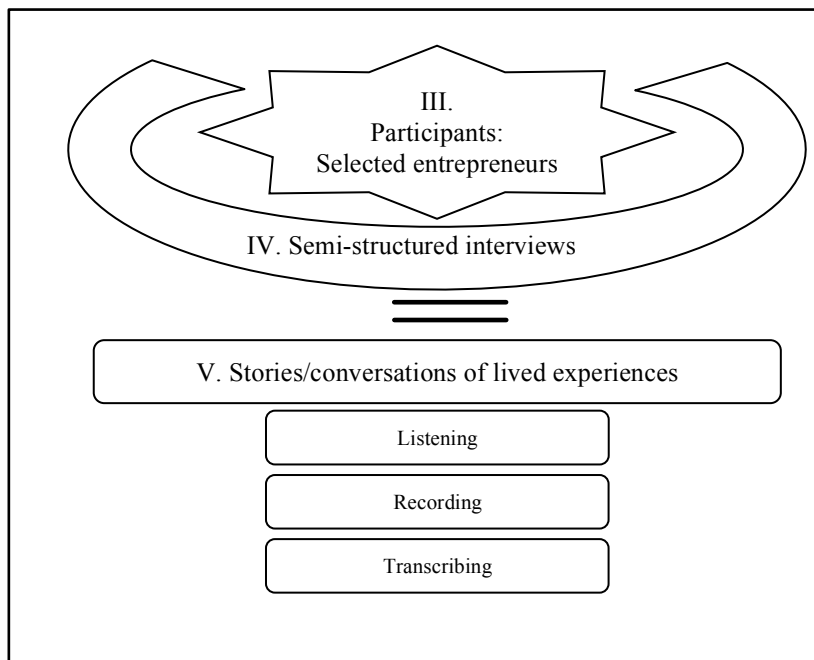
### **Recording the interviews.**

All interviews were recorded. This was as a result of a conscious decision to remain as close to the lived experience as possible (van Manen, 2001). Two devices were used so there was a back up if one stopped recording. The digital recording on each device was made possible by using an application called "Voice Memos." An advantage of this program was that this application is suited to interviewing because it is able to record and track the conversation by marking seconds, minutes and hours. This program tracked the recordings using incremental time and made it easier to track and reference what was said. I documented these coordinating time intervals using the participant's initials and the documented time (e.g., (JR 3.00)). In some cases the recorder had to be shut off or I began a second or third recording within the same interview sitting. Subsequent recording copies were identified within square brackets between the participant's initials and the recorded time (e.g., (JR [2] 3.00)). A disadvantage of the

particular recording program was found in the device itself. If an email or phone call interrupts the interview, the recording stopped. As a fail-safe, all external communication capabilities were shut off during the interview, and two recording devices were used. The recordings were backed up on my computer and moved to an external device that would be eventually included with the stored documents at the university. Each interview took place in the participant's city of residence and most often in their office.

### **Data Collection.**

I collected the data using three steps: Listening, recording, and transcribing (See Figure 3.1b.).



**Figure 3.1b.** Depiction of the Logic of Data Collection.

The steps will be described as follows:

#### **Step 1. Listening.**

Setting up an interview is as a cultural representational process that reflects the theoretical underpinnings and purpose of the study (Green, Franquiz & Dixon, 1997).

What is represented in the transcript (e.g., talk, time, nonverbal actions speaker/hearer relationships, physical orientation, multiple languages, translations); who is representing whom, in what ways, for what purpose, and with what outcome; and how analysts position themselves and their participants in their representations of form, content, and action. (Green et al., 1997, p. 173)

For each interview, I went to participant's place of work or home. I did so to provide a secure and comfortable place where I could also link the participant with their own settings and surroundings (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). I listened to their stories and responses to my questions, and noted patterns in their environment and actions that may be consistent with what they were saying. I took notes that drew me to description, as well as enabled me to record emerging questions and make clarification points for further consideration and use if necessary.

Step 2. Recording. (See above Figure 3.1b.)

For each interview, I digitally recorded the stories on two recorders as a safety precaution. I stopped after the first 3-4 minutes to check that each recorder was working. The program allowed me to download the interview onto my computer and see the recording in increments of minutes and seconds. This was valuable for referencing and analysis purposes. Duranti (2007) argued that translation is a transformation of both sound and image from a recording. This gave me the advantage (Sacks, 1995) of being able to listen to the recording over and over again. In this case, I was able to recall images, body movements and special and relational pieces that might have made a difference on how a statement piece might have been understood. (See above "Recording the interviews" for a detailed description of the recording system and timing).

Step 3. Transcribing. (See below Figure 3.1c.)

I transcribed all interviews using both an electronic transcription (Dragon Dictate) and I conducted a manual correction and check. I kept a separate record of either audible or visual observations that I gathered through both the interview and transcription. The stories were transferred verbatim and kept on a removable data back-up system. According to Duranti (2007), the way a researcher chooses to transcribe his or her data is unique to the researcher, reflects both cultural practice and activity (Duranti, 2007), and represents the theoretical and ontological positions of the researcher (Mischler, 1991; Green et al. (1997). In all but one case (Luc and Anne Duval) I conducted individual interviews. After each interview, I began the process of transcribing that interview. I transcribed what was said using a program called Dragon Dictate and personal listening/reciting. Because Dragon is programmable to a particular voice (mine) it did not recognize each of the voices of the participants. So, I listened to a sentence in the interview and dictated it back into the dictate program. While this was extremely time consuming, and companies are available to do this service, I felt that it served to ground me in the data. I also listened to the interview while checking the transcription for accuracy.

During the process of transcription, I included the time reference in increments of minutes and seconds, as they registered in the recorded version of the interview. I created a referencing system that would make sense to those reading the document as well as to the researcher. The following example describes the system:

In the reference (LD [2] 1:10.4), LD represents the participant's initial. A number in the bracket [2] signals that there was more than one session- meaning that I had to stop and start the tape as a new session. The number described which session. Numbers before the

colon, if there was one, represented the hour marker. The second number represented the minute marker, and the last number represented the seconds marker. This process corresponded directly to the recording and the transcript. .

Printed transcripts were given to the other participants to read and recheck for accuracy of information and meaning. I removed any part of the interview transcript that was requested by the participants and received written approvals for use from nine of the twelve participants (see Figure 3.1b.). In addition, I recognized that there were questions that emerged from the interviews that I had not asked the first participant. I emailed that participant to ask if he would mind answering that question. He was happy to do so, and replied to me in an email. Another participant had mentioned that he wasn't sure if his son could be considered an entrepreneur even though he had started and successfully run multiple businesses. With the participant's permission, I contacted his son by email, explained what I was doing, and asked him if he considered himself to be entrepreneurial. In the second case, I did not use anything the son said in this dissertation other than the idea that he did not consider himself entrepreneurial.

The interviews were guided by the use of open-ended, semi-structured questions designed to elicit thick descriptions and insightful and rich stories that would reveal of the essence of entrepreneurial minds.

Often sample size in qualitative studies is not predetermined. The number of participants that will be needed is determined by the number necessary to inform the exploration of the phenomenon being studied throughout the progression of the study. When additional participants fail to garner any new information, data

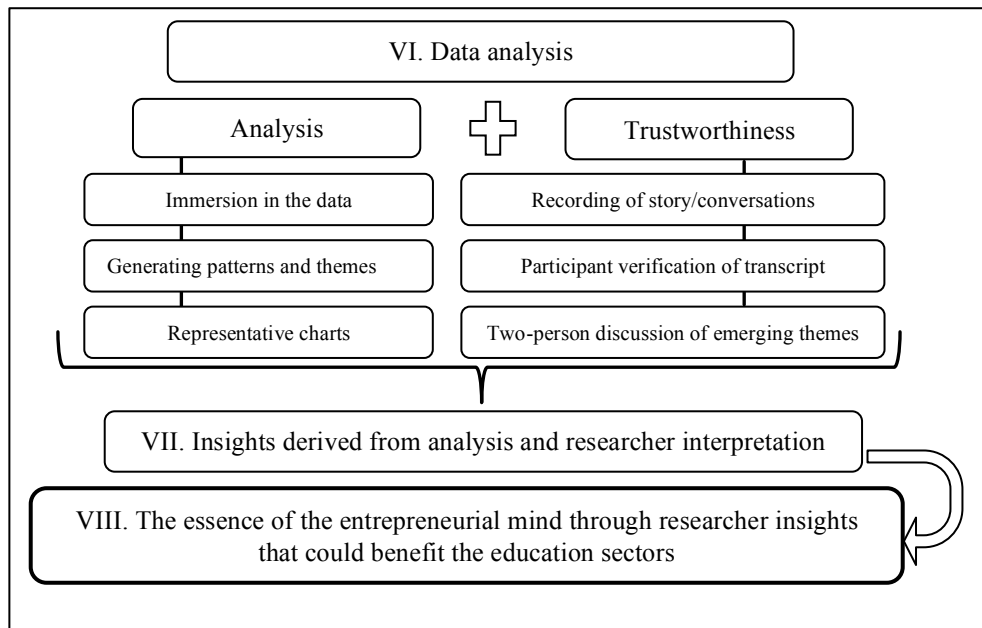
saturation is achieved (e.g., Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 2006; Creswell, 1998).

As what would become the last interviews, each interview yielded little new information that had not already been disclosed by previous interviews; the exception of course were the unique stories. Marshall (1996) deemed that “the appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is one that adequately answers the research question” (p. 523). The questions were answered as evidenced by the repetition of responses to the interview questions. Mason (2010) called this the point of “diminishing return” in a qualitative sample. He argued that it isn’t necessarily true in qualitative data that more would necessarily give you new or better information. Numbers are rarely as important as is meaning. Meaning is established from what is said not from the number who said it. Instead, Creswell (2009) argued that participants in a qualitative study are selected based on their ability to inform the research question and enhance the phenomenon of the study.

#### **Data Analysis Steps and Procedures.**

I was rigorous in my attempts to present accurate description through the participant’s words. At the same time, adopting a constructivist or interpretivist paradigm, I was able to construct meaning through a cyclical approach to questions and participant story telling (Ernest, 1994). The narrative approach allowed freedom for the researcher’s voice to be heard as part of the process of uncovering meaning from and in the telling of lived stories. I was diligent in using actual participant quotes every chance I had, especially as I unpacked meaning or themes; but I also had the advantage of observing them throughout the interview and within their own surroundings. The phases for data collection and analysis for this study were as follows:





**Figure 3.1c.** Depiction of the Logic of the Data Analysis.

I drew on the work of Marshall and Rossman (2006) and others (e.g., Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Berglund, 2007; Creswell, 2007) to guide my decisions for data analysis.

Typically, qualitative data is divided into a series of phases beginning with organizing data and ending with presenting the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Schatzman and Strauss, (1973) articulate the elements of data collection and analysis in a qualitative study by saying:

Qualitative data are exceedingly complex and not readily convertible into standard measureable units of objects seen and heard; they vary in level of abstraction, in frequency of occurrence, in relevance to the central questions of the research. Also they vary in the source or ground from which they are experienced... he needs to analyze as he goes along both to adjust his observation strategies, shifting some emphasis towards those experiences which bear upon the development of his understanding, and generally to exercise control over his emerging ideas by virtually simultaneous checking or testing of these ideas. (pp. 108-110)

Following the completion of the semi-structured interviews and the transcription and participant approval of the transcripts of the interviews, I printed each page of every transcript. I hi-lighted and then cut out each individual statement that appeared to relate, or speak, to any of the research questions (Moustakas, 1994, p.13). This analysis method dictated that I needed to totally immerse myself in the data.

**Immersing in the data.** (See figure 3. 1c.)

As indicated, the interviews were recorded on an audio recorder, so I had the advantage of listening to each one over and over. Even in the process of transcription, I listened and spoke the lines many, many times. After I transcribed the material I printed off each of the transcripts and once again read it over for key statements of meaning to the research questions. I also had the advantage of being able to note surroundings and characteristics of the participant during the interview because I did not have to take notes of what was being said. This was how I began the process of generating understanding of the phenomenon - the essence of the mind of an entrepreneur, as it is manifest in this group of participants.

**Generating categories and themes.** (see Figure 3.1c)

Probably the most fundamental operation in the analysis of qualitative data is that of discovering significant classes of things, persons and events and the properties which characterize them...he names classes and links one another, at first with simple statements (propositions) that express the linkages, and continues this process until his propositions fall into sets, in an ever-increasing density of linkages. (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, pp. 108-110)

The consideration of themes was accomplished through a process of componential analysis, a qualitative analysis technique for the study of content of meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). It is common to use this type of data analysis “to build several kinds of

models about how people think” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002, p. 263). The underlying principle is the idea of minimal set—a way of comparing meanings and interpretations of life experience by drawing on the least amount of features needed to distinguish it from another ideas. From this method one can see how a particular society structures its knowledge and interprets its life experiences (McElhanon & Headland, 2004). I immersed myself in the interview data of each participant through listening to the interviews both in person and on the recording, speaking each word into the transcription program and then checking for errors. From each participant’s story, I was able to recognize statements that spoke to the research questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). I manually color marked statements, with a highlighter, that spoke to a particular research question. I made sure that each statement contained the initials that would identify the participant so that I could refer back to the participant story when identifying the stories and themes.

When I had highlighted each participant interview, I brought all the data together by cutting out each statement and combining the statements with the other participants. It was important for me to create a visual display in order to organize quotes, and help me recognize meaningful statements in response to the questions (Moustakas, 1990; Riessman, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These were “salient themes, reoccurring ideas or language, patterns of belief that link people and settings together” that brought coherence to the entire endeavour (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 118). I taped a copy of each research question on a large wall and tacked each individual statement as these seemed to me to correspond with the research questions. After each statement was considered and single similarities distinguished themselves, I made headings and

clustered the statements within their theme. Once all of the formative statements were on the walls in groupings of similar themes, I made note of the significant ideas that appeared to speak to the research questions and not necessarily by the number of responses.

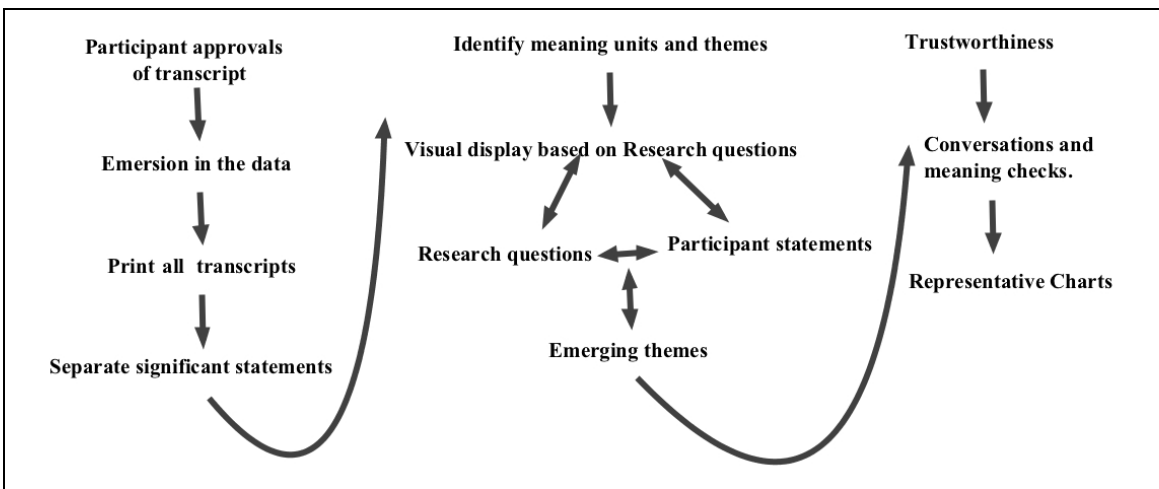
I then invited a colleague to a conversation around the groupings that I had made. She was invited to view this visual display of quotes and themes. She read each quote and considered its place in each group. Through our back and forth discussion of themes and placements, and by moving statements as a result of those conversations, I felt like a trustworthy summary of key insights had emerged from what the participants had said.

**Conversations of themes and meaning checks.** (See Figure 3.3c.)

Once statements were narrowed into themes, I looked for opportunities to engage in conversations with educators, participants themselves, and other entrepreneurs. This gave me a chance to compare the emergent points with post interview thoughts, with others who were not involved in the interviews or the study, and to stimulate participant memories that may not have been remembered at the time of their interview. These reflective conversations were an opportunity for the researcher and the participants to “attempt to interpret the significance of the preliminary themes in the light of the original phenomenological question” (van Manen, 2001, p. 99). For example, I had the opportunity to talk about some of the emerging themes with an entrepreneur who had a very similar story, but was not one of the participants. I had the opportunity to informally meet with a group that also included some of the participants. With their permission, I briefly described the themes. Both the participants, and those who knew them, affirmed

that the themes described what they knew about the participants who were there, accurately.

According to Creswell (2007) the data “collected in a narrative study need to be analyzed for the story they have to tell, a chronology of unfolding events, and turning points or epiphanies. Within this broad sketch of analysis, several options exist for the narrative researcher” (p. 155). Figure 3.3. shows a detailed description of the data analysis process from the participant approvals (which included requested changes) to the creation of representative figures. The analysis occurred in an order from left to right as described above.



**Figure 3.3.** Description of data analysis process.

### **Representative Figures (See Figure 3.3.)**

One by one, I transferred the meaning units and the statement slips back into the computer with the key idea that my colleague and I agreed most clearly represented the statements in that group. When this was done, I created diagrams that best represented those statements within the themes. These charts and diagrams were not so much a representation of the numbers of people who had made the claims, but

were about knowing how the choice in one category may have reflected the choice in another. For instance, it was significant that only a few of these entrepreneurs had grandparents who were entrepreneurs, and yet out of the group that did, only a couple had parents whom they would consider entrepreneurial, and even fewer could identify that in one or more of their children.

It was at this point that I began to re-tell their story in light of the themes that had emerged through the interviews and confirmed through immersion in the data, through various conversations (e.g., Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1998; Berglund, 2007), and for the purpose of answering the questions posed in this dissertation. Cohen et al. (2007) suggested that interpretivist researchers seek to “understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants” (p. 19). I took an objective stance when it came to the data. I used only participant quotes to inform the themes. I looked at the data thoroughly and I was careful that the data informed the condition of the participant and the resulting themes rather than my own preconceptions. The role of an interpretivist researcher also requires that I be emerged in the data, that I seek to understand their world, and that I recognize and interpret insights especially as it was salient through my own understanding, background and reflection. It was from this theme wall, individual interviews and understandings became collective or aggregate understandings and themes.

The processing and analyzing the data were a massive undertaking. For example, one interview lasted six hours, another I had one participant talked very quickly, and ultimately, it was also hard to cut off the stories as nuggets of lived experience emerged

through even the most unexpected remembrance. In spite of this, the stories and time with these entrepreneurs impacted me in ways that I can not explain. I have a new appreciation and respect for each one.

**Trustworthiness.** (see Figure 3.1c.)

Qualitative research needs to be rigorous in how it is supported and in the meanings that are ascribed (Hammersley, 2008). In these ways, this research demonstrates trustworthiness. Polkinghorne (2007) pointed out that life stories are meaningful to the person telling them. Thus, as researcher I needed to gauge reliability by understanding meanings attached to the stories rather than merely to the accuracy of the story itself.

In the earlier section, I have alluded to processes and phases of this research that contributed to its trustworthiness. Here I give particular and explicit attention to this qualitative research attribute. Trustworthiness is defined as “ that quality of an investigation (and its findings) that made it noteworthy to audiences” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 299). Lincoln and Guba (1985) coined this term as a way to refer to the criteria for determining the quality of qualitative inquiry (Schwandt, 2007). The authors also provided evaluative criteria for qualitative studies, in order to establish trustworthiness: Credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Although transferability is considered to be a quantitative measure, I will show the degree that I believe this study is transferable. I will use these criteria to show how trustworthiness was established in this study.

In this research trustworthiness was established in the following ways:

## Credibility

Credibility is considered to be trust or the assurance that my representation provides an accurate picture of what the participant understood and presented (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Schwandt, 2007). In order to accomplish this:

- I built trust by clearly outlining expectations and requirements, first, by introducing myself and then introducing the goal of the study. I used a carefully defined script as a guide (see appendix D).
- Trust was also established by providing the participant with a letter of interview consent that carefully outlined the parameters of the interview, how the interview data would be handled, and their rights as a participant (see appendix E).
- By encouraging the participant to tell their story to someone who was authentically listening, I built trust, but also I was able to allow the data to rise above or beyond my own preconceptions, where these may have existed.
- Credibility was also established by employing two-person data analysis check to get an additional perspective, as described above. I had gone through all interviews and manually cut exact quotes from the transcript sheets of interviews that I felt had any meaning or relevance to the topic or questions. I had sorted them into meaningful units or themes (Moustakas, 1990; Riessman, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and created a meaning wall. I invited an educator to look at the wall of themes, and based on the quotes from the data, engaged in a conversation around her sense about whether or not I had misrepresented any of the quotes, or had or had not imposed a theme on a quote that appeared to mean something else. We discussed the perceived accuracy of the quote and its perceived place in each theme



(Riessman, 2008). In this way, I took precaution against the perception or potential reality that I might have imposed my own words or thoughts on what the participant had said.

- By requiring transcript checks by all participants. Once the recording was completed, I sent a written copy to each participant to give him or her an opportunity to respond to, and to check the transcript for accuracy. In some cases, the participant clarified what they had said as a way of clarifying meaning. In the case of the Honourable Doug Horner, his secretary also had to read the transcript for something that had potential to damage to his political career. In one case, a participant was removed from the study because I could not get a signed approval on the transcription of the interview before my deadline.

#### Transferability

Schwandt (2007) described transferability in qualitative studies as the researcher's responsibility to provide enough detail and information so that the findings could be found to be similar or recognizable in other participants.

- While the data were not intended to be transferable to all or other entrepreneurs, according to Holloway (1997) thick, or very detailed descriptions of participant accounts are important to determine if there are patterns that might be recognizable in others. In this study, rich descriptions and stories were recorded and transcribed.
- From these descriptions, themes or patterns emerged and were identifiable or recognizable in other participant stories. While the existence of patterns what certainly a matter of researcher interpretation, substantive support for these descriptions, themes and patterns were provided by the quoted words and contexts

of interviewees perspectives. In most cases the interpretations were self-evident and, I believe, were such as could be seen by other interpreters (including my second readers).

### Dependability

Dependability is a construct that relied on my capacity to show the process by which the study was “logical, traceable, and documented” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 299). I have depicted my chosen design and processes in this chapter.

- The process of having a two-person discussion of emerging themes (see above) was indication measure of dependability.
- I contacted participants, as was necessary, to clarify accuracy of the transcript data and/or depiction of descriptions of their perspectives.
- In addition, I recorded the interview so that the participant’s words, energy and intonations could be considered and so that what was transcribed was an accurate representation of what was said. I listened to the recordings myself many times and then transcribed them myself so I was very familiar with each interview and the data therein.

### Confirmability

Confirmability insured that the themes, findings and interpretations were not simply the result of my own thinking but that the findings, patterns, themes and insights were linked in discernable ways to the original data in recorded and transcribed form (Schwandt, 2007).

- I also established confirmability by clarifying specific details of the interview, as necessary, with participants in a formal or informal way after the interviews.

Member or participant checking is an appropriate way to check for accuracy of what I was interpreting, what needed to be clarified and ask additional questions as needed (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).
- I talked with colleagues about processes, possible connections to some of the themes, and ways of approaching this study. Moustakas (1990) suggested trustworthiness occurs through the process of “reflecting, sifting, exploring, judging its relevance or meaning, and ultimately elucidating the themes and essences that comprehensively, distinctively, and accurately depict the experience [of entrepreneurial thought]” (p.32). Riessman (2008) called for researchers to talk about what does not fit their claims and to discuss alternate interpretations.

Highlighting other and alternative views and insights further showed the complexity of this research topic and the validity of each representation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that peer debriefing was an appropriate way to establish confirmability and trustworthiness. This was accomplished through conversations with participants during the data analysis phase (after their interview) as new questions came up, or as ideas emerged from other interviews. In addition, informal conversations with participants and scholars were possible. For example, I spoke with the former president of Babson College, Len Schlesinger, during the data analysis process with the hope that I could compare some of the emerging themes to his work on entrepreneurial thought in action. His feedback and thoughts were valuable in their affirmation of my

direction and added to the credibility, dependability and confirm ability of the logic of the study.

I believe that all of these actions support the trustworthiness of this research. Care was taken to preserve the integrity of what was said and how it was interpreted. In addition, I took care to make sure that there was an interweaving of morality and ethical behaviour – a personal guard that demanded that I advocate for others in every way possible. These precautions included the guarantee that all participants could chose to be interviewed and could decide what data were released (see Appendix F); they signed a letter of consent (See Appendix D); completed mandatory transcript check and approval form (see Appendix F); participants consent at each stage (see Appendices D & F); no family members were interviewed; tapes are (and will be) stored in keeping with the University regulations, and participants had the right to withdraw at any stage of the study (see Appendices D & F) .

### **Ethical Considerations**

Narrative ‘is the stories people live. People live stories, and in the telling of them reaffirm them, modify them and create new ones’.  
(Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 155)

Ethical issues exist in qualitative studies where people tell their stories. In telling those stories, we in small ways, become characters in them and change them by what we grab on to and what we attach to them. It is in telling this story that we risk betraying the trust of the participants individually or as a group (Finch, 1985). The morality question exists when one is forced to the crossroads of betraying the trust of the participant for the sake of the study. Josselson (2007) addressed these ethical issues by contending that each

researcher must develop an ethical attitude to replace the need for exhaustive lists of rules for each research opportunity. Throughout this study, there was an interweaving of morality and ethical behaviour- a personal guard that demanded that I advocate for others in every way possible. In order to do this more effectively, I adopted the following precautions for those involved in this study:

- All participation was voluntary and participants had the opportunity to reconsider any material from their interviews before it was included in the study or summaries.
- Participants signed a Letter of Interview Consent form (see Appendix D) that explained the intent of the research, confidentiality, rights of the participant as well as the obligations of the researcher. It also outlined withdrawing options as well as how the results and interpretations would be assembled and used.
- The participant received transcripts of their interviews for an opportunity to add or eliminate any information that they felt misrepresent their intentions in any way.
- After reading the transcripts, participants signed each page and the Letter of Consent for Release of Transcripts form (see Appendix H). This form also recorded their permission to use the information in my study and for the future use of the results (which may include publication and presentation). The results were available to all participants at the culmination of the study.
- Consent was revisited at each stage of the process. This began with an initial verbal consent to be a participant, and followed by way of the written consent, and transcript consents. Participant and consent was verbally re-affirmed at each stage (see Appendixes D, G and H).

- There were no members of my family/intimate relationships interviewed. There were no means for power differentials.
- The tape recordings and interview transcripts will be destroyed at the end of the study. In two cases, family members requested the interview recordings. The participant verbally granted permission.
- At any time, participants could choose to withdraw from the study.
- The University of Saskatchewan Behaviour Research Ethics Board gave ethics approval for this research. The ethics proposal (Appendix A) was approved and the Certificate of Approval (see Appendix B) confirmed that a delegated review found that the study was ethically acceptable. An updated renewal was also granted.

The letter of consent (see Appendix D) contained:

- An explanation of the purpose of the study;
- A request for the potential participant to take part in the study;
- Interviewing expectations and the right to withdraw from an interview or the study at any time;
- An opportunity for the participant to add, delete, and change the transcript as they see fit;
- A transcript release option;
- A promise of how the material will be kept secure;
- A description of the use of the findings.

### **About the Researcher**

To complete this study, I assumed responsibility to capture, communicate and interpret meaningful experiences the way they were experienced in every day life, and is

consistent with interpretivist paradigms (Berglund, 2007). My role in this study was to “understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Consistent to interpretivist thinking, the researcher must look at the data so thoroughly that the data informs the study rather than the researchers’ own preconceptions (Cohen, et al., 2007). As the researcher, it was also imperative that I had the capacity to understand and to find meaning in those stories. According to von Eckartsberg (1986), this occurs when the phenomenon is meaningful to the researcher.

My interest in this topic stems from an authentic understanding and interest in educational leadership and entrepreneurial behaviour. My background comes from education. I always wanted to teach. I was able to fulfill that dream in unique settings, with diversity of, not only ages, but also types of learners. My years in administration drew my attention to the changing roles of our school leaders, and especially the move to site-based management where principals were now responsible for balancing scarce budgets.

I have also spent the last 37 years with one foot in the business world, where our family business experience has afforded me the privilege of seeing entrepreneurs create, innovate and survive even the most precarious of situations and devastations. I have also had an opportunity to work beside of one of the sharpest entrepreneurial thinkers I have known, my husband. He has been a valuable sounding board for my thoughts and work.

My passion for this study has also reflected a deep desire to see school leaders be creators of new ideas and problem-solvers; that they would be supported as they risk, innovate, and make a difference in the learning opportunities for children.

This is who I was at the beginning of this study. I was not prepared for the impact that these people would have on me throughout this study. Consequently, I am not the same at its end.

### **Summary of the Research Design, Methodology and Approach**

The Mind of an Entrepreneur: Exploring Lived Experiences was qualitative study that rests upon an adaptation of the existing approaches of a narrative and phenomenology in order to ensure their utility in achieving the research goals of this study. I chose a qualitative methodology due to the reflective nature of its' approach. This methodology provided me with an opportunity to listen and to record stories and remembrances from a targeted group of participants.

All participants were selected using purposive sampling. There were nine participants' who completed the interviews and approval stages of this study. After my initial contact with them, they were involved in at least one interview and some targeted less formal conversations. This was often to further clarify what was said, or to confirm my interpretation. I guided the interviews with semi-structured questions and took independent notes during the interview. All interviews were recorded through the use of two voice memo-recording devices. I used a digital program called Dragon Dictate to transcribe all interviews. In addition, all recordings and manuscripts were manually checked for transcription errors. Participants approved all transcripts.

The data from each interview were then analyzed by reducing the information that did not reflect the focus of the research. The meaning statements were then combined and sorted into meaning units as they reflected responses to the research questions. The researcher then identified themes as represented by the collective. These stories were then



retold using the statements extracted from the interviews and organized in respective themes. Trustworthiness was attained through each of the steps of data gathering, by participant validation, as well as through the way the data were analyzed.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **LIVED EXPERIENCES OF ENTREPRENEURS**

I consider my husband an entrepreneur. Not only has he initiated and lead businesses (Gartner, 1989), he has been instrumental in starting campgrounds, business parks, schools and bringing countless innovative ideas to the forefront on committees, boards, and within the community. In addition, I have watched him for forty years and marveled at the way his mind works. For years I thought the restlessness, the active mind, the relentless drive, and the ability to immediately respond with solutions, was a unique characteristic within this one man. I looked for pieces in his past that would provide an explanation for how he thinks: his boarding school experience, international travel as a child, familial influences, inherited traits, grandparents, for example, to account for his entrepreneurial zest. I have watched his struggles – mostly with committees and people who were afraid to take risks, to make decisions, or to set off into something new. I watched as he created a business opportunity, early in our marriage, that would involve his father and brother. I watched as the idea of risk made his father very ill - leaving him no other choice but to cancel the opportunity. I marveled as he helped me set up business opportunities and then, as if no risk were involved, encouraged me to follow my dream of education, even though we had three small children. The idea of additional responsibilities, and going back to a single income did not stop him from seeing the potential in the idea.

New ideas come as easily as asking him for them. His problem-solving ability is uncanny and new ideas come to him as fast as he can verbalize them. His worth on

committees and boards has increased as his skill at problem solving built equity for him in every situation.

Then I began to recognize others who appeared to function in a similar fashion. Initially, I saw that kind of thinking displayed by leaders in the automobile industry because it was the most accessible given our own business. Very quickly, though, my interest peeked as I recognized this same quality in people of other occupations as well. I was often surprised, as comments would surface that reminded me of the characteristics that I recognized in my husband. I did not see those in every businessperson, even though they were successful and in some cases, in a business they had started. It was in my search through the literature, I realized that few studies considered the possibility that there may be a different type of entrepreneur that was not simply a new business creator, but someone who thought entrepreneurially. The study was inspired from the inquiry into the mind of this kind of entrepreneur.

As indicated, the purpose of this study was to explore the lived experience of entrepreneurs in such a way that we can garner greater insight into the mind of an entrepreneur and informs possible educational practices. I wanted to look at someone who used his or her entrepreneurial skill beyond a single start-up business. It became important to find entrepreneurs who were perceived by their peers and/or by others to have made an impact in multiple areas of the community, business and/or educational realms to see how they thought. The broader success of the individual was important in so far as I wanted to differentiate entrepreneurs from the common definition of a person expressing him or herself through a single business start-up experience. Such a person

may own a business as a result of something other than entrepreneurial prowess (e.g., inherited business, particular circumstances, or necessity).

I summarize their stories in this chapter. Each description begins with how I was introduced to each interviewee, or how he or she came to be recommended to me. Their stories tell who they are, what they have done, and some of the ways that they have been recognized as a different kind of thinker. In some cases, I have included information from articles or newspapers that may have served to further introduce or give meaning to who they are and/or the stories they have told.

Following these participant summaries, I present the results of the data collecting phase which, in agreement with van Manen (1990), would involve a retrospective look at individual stories as remembered and told by the participants. As indicated, I used semi-structured interview questions as a way to prompt the participant to recall specific memories and life stories, as they may be relevant to the focus of this study.

The introduction of each of the participants reflects the chronological order of my interviews. Any information that I was able to retrieve about them via newspapers, the Internet, and other sources, along with the unanalyzed stories obtained through opened ended questions and dialogue were documented and used as applicable (Giorgi, 2012).

It became evident that with each new interview, questions were created that reflected responses from previous interviews. In some cases, I was able to go back to prior participants and ask those questions, however, due to the nature and roles of the participants, this was not always possible.

The data I have presented are a result of the process of data analysis, described above, and are a result of emerging or existing metacognitive awareness, or what

participants considered and described about their thinking, as they brought into consciousness their stories. This summary is presented thematically following the participant introductions.

### **Introducing the Entrepreneurial Participants**

The following table presents a brief look at each participant by identifying them by name, age, geography and sector of involvement.

Table 4.1

Entrepreneurial Participant Overview

<b>Interview Order</b>	<b>Participant Name (XX)*</b>	<b>Age Grouping</b>	<b>Geography**</b>	<b>Sectors</b>	<b>Started One or More Businesses</b>
<b>1</b>	Richard Gauthier (RM)	60-65	Toronto, Ontario	Private, Public, Plural	Yes (1)
<b>2</b>	Al MacPhee (AM)	70-75	Halifax, Nova Scotia	Private, Public, Plural	Yes (multiple)
<b>3</b>	Luc Duval (LD)	55-60	Boucherville, Quebec	Private, Public	Yes (multiple)
<b>4</b>	Anne Duval (AD)	20-25	Wellesley, Massachusetts USA	Public, Plural	No
<b>5</b>	Robert Chipman (RC)***	90-95	Winnipeg, Manitoba	Private, Public, Plural	Yes (multiple)
<b>6</b>	Gordon Rumpel (GR)***	80-85	Calgary, Alberta	Private, Public, Plural	Yes (multiple)
<b>7</b>	Doug Horner (DH)	50-55	Edmonton, Alberta	Private, Public, Plural	Yes (multiple)
<b>8</b>	John Robinson (JR)	65-70	Springbank, Alberta	Private, Public, Plural	Yes (multiple)

(Continued)

Interview Order	Participant Name (XX)*	Age Grouping	Geography**	Sectors	Started One or More Businesses
9	Cathy Bennett (CB)	45-50	St Johns, Newfoundland	Private, Public, Plural	Yes (multiple)

\*Refers to reference symbols used to cite participant in text

\*\*Where they currently reside or attend school

\*\*\*Deceased prior to publication

The above table is a summary of the participants in this study. The age grouping indicates the span of ages from the youngest to the very oldest. It also shows the geographical range of where the participants reside and do the greater part of their work. At the time of the interview, one participant lived and attended school in Massachusetts, in the United States. She is the daughter of another participant in this study. Sector(s) refer to one of three areas of involvement a participant allocates his or her resources to.

### **Richard Gauthier (RG): President and CEO Canadian Automotive Dealers Association**

The first participant that I interviewed was Mr. Richard (Rick) Gauthier: President of Canadian Automobile Dealer Association (CADA) situated in Toronto, Ontario.

I have watched how Rick Gauthier's propensity for thinking innovatively, for creating new realities, and taking calculated risks in response of opportunity has made a difference for business leaders, in and outside of the automobile industry, across Canada. He was a past business owner, before he became the CEO of this national organization, Canadian Automobile Dealers Association (CADA). In this role, he is renown for quickly seeing solutions, for preplanning all possible scenarios and handling delicate situations with wisdom, grace and intelligence.

Rick is a different type of thinker. He risks, he creates, he pushes the edge of what he does for the CADA, for the business leaders, and for the entrepreneurs he gathers around him and guides. Richard only started one business, which deviates slightly from the directives of the study, but I was intrigued with his ability and conscious effort to surround himself with exactly the kind of entrepreneurial thinkers that I was seeking for this study. I was intrigued to hear his perspective on the influences of his life, to hear his story, and to get his perspective on the many entrepreneurial thinkers he recruits and works with.

Mr. Gauthier was born in Quebec. In grade 4, his father was transferred to Edmonton, Alberta. No one else in his family spoke a word of English in those early years. According to Rick, there was no such thing as an ESL program; at least that he could have access to. Gauthier explained, “You went in and the first thing I knew I had English books in front of me” (RG 14.00). His father believed that a second language was a skill that would serve him well the rest of his life. According to Rick, his father was right. He said, “my father opened my mind to other things ... he did not want to confine us to the boundaries of the Québec borders,” even though his roots were firmly planted there (RG 14.00).

Rick’s first job was working for a Québec firm collecting delinquent accounts. Later, he was offered a permanent job at General Motors (GM) Acceptance Corporation, one of the top performing companies of the day. At that time, GM sold one out of every two cars in North America. For Gauthier, the ones who succeeded in a corporation like this were “the ones that make the sacrifices ... you’ve got to say yes whenever you’ve got an opportunity,” he claimed (RG 5.00). Rick also attributed his own success to the fact

that he was keen and eager, and that he was willing to listen, act on advice, and work hard and fast!

Gauthier found himself being transferred to places such as New Brunswick and Ontario. Before long, he was the youngest Assistant Control Branch Manager of the North American arm of the company (GMAC). Even so, Rick responded to an opportunity to open a new business in Montreal. Gauthier successfully ran this store for the next 18 years.

At the time of this interview, Rick was living in Toronto, serving as the President of the C.A.D.A. This national trade association represents over 3500 franchised automobile dealers who sell domestic and imported trucks and cars and employ over 100,000 people across the nation. Rick is key to the negotiations at a national level especially as it requires bringing together the business and political factions of all aspects of the car business. He has led teams in efforts to lobby federal departments including Environment, Finance, Industry, Justice and Revenue Canada. Gauthier's success has also generated from his innovative and no nonsense approach to issues involving the Federal government, manufacturers, and individual business owners.

In 1993, Rick was awarded the TIME Magazine Quality Dealer for Montreal. According to *The Globe and Mail*, Rick's extensive volunteer history has included serving in as President of the following organizations: La Corporation des Concessionnaires d'Automobiles de Montreal, Montreal International Auto Show, GM Dealers Association of Montreal, and the Fondation Bonne Route. Rick has also served as a Past Director of CADA and La Corporation des Concessionnaires d'Automobiles du Quebec.



Gauthier has a reputation for being able to think differently. He has developed business acumen and has uncontested success in surrounding himself with proven entrepreneurial thinkers. This has shown up in the successes of his business and this growing organization, but it also makes him a valuable participant in this study.

**Al MacPhee (AM): Founder and President of MacPhee Enterprises**

The next participant to introduce is Mr. Al MacPhee: Founder and President of MacPhee Enterprises, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

I first met Mr. MacPhee in his role as chairman of the Canadian Automobile Dealers Association. His quick thinking and history of entrepreneurial success, as well as a number of conversations, spurred me to believe that he was reminiscent of the type of thinker I was interested in exploring. I flew from Calgary to Halifax to meet with him and arrived early in the morning. I drove to Mr. MacPhee's place of business, and to a modest office at the top of the stairs at MacPhee Pontiac Buick GMC Ltd.

Al MacPhee's hard work and passion may have been stimulated by growing up on a farm in Cape Breton that "grew rocks and lumber," MacPhee quipped, or possibly from the fact that he was the eleventh child of fourteen children. His family was originally from Scotland, and as far back as he remembered, both his parents communicated in Gaelic.

Al left college after just the first semester to pursue city cash and a career that he hoped could facilitate that opportunity. He accepted a job at a car dealership and quickly earned status of Grand Master salesperson - an honour that was considered to be the best in General Motors guild. MacPhee, he saw no chance for advancement there so he quit the car business and started a heavy equipment store. The recession forced him to rethink

the feasibility of this venture. MacPhee remembered how he jumped into his Cutlass supreme, threw some books in the trunk, and visited every contractor this territory everyday until "they got sick of me," he said (AM 12.00). Though he did get some sales, he recognized quickly that this was not the opportunity that he was looking for and decided to go back into the car business. According to Al, he and his wife, Mary, worked bell to bell, to pay off their house, save money, and be prepared for the next opportunity.

Al soon recognized that there were a lot of jobs that provided work, but few jobs allowed you the opportunity to own the company. He wanted to own the company. Al recalled years of hard work, creative relationships, and a willingness to put everything on the line. In 1983, he bought the car dealership where he was working. Al described business at that time "like a garden, you had to plant, tend, weed, and transplant to get something to grow tight. It wasn't just happening" (AM [2] 29.00). Al discovered what could be accomplished by hard work. His wife, Mary, taught school and raised the family while Al continued to work long hours at the store. They chose to continue to live frugally in order to sustain their business but also to build capital so they might continue to respond to new opportunities.

Mr. MacPhee now owns four auto dealerships (MacPhee Pontiac Buick GMC Ltd., Forbes Chevrolet Ltd., Chebucto Ford Ltd. and Halifax Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ltd.), has helped start and invested in countless other business opportunities, and personally employs over 400 people. MacPhee Pontiac Buick GMC Ltd., in Dartmouth, has grown to become the largest Pontiac dealership in Atlantic Canada and consistently places in the top ten General Motors dealerships in Canada. He has lead this business to 19 Triple Crown Awards offered by General Motors and in 1990 was honoured with the *GMC*

*Circle of Excellence Trophy* for best overall record in personnel development, sales, parts and accessory sales, customer satisfaction and a commitment to excellence.

Al's community can count on him when they need him, and that has fueled the delight for his wife, Mary, and himself. If a child needs surgery, or a family is in need, they want to have the power to give, not to only wish they had the means to help. Consequently, they have been driving forces in the Halifax/Dartmouth area, and well beyond.

Al has served in leadership positions on many advisory boards such as the Canadian Automobile Dealer Association, the Nova Scotia Automobile Association, and Leader Auto Resources. He has been involved with the Metro Chamber of Commerce and the BCA Investment Corporation and many General Motors Advisory Boards. Mr. MacPhee was also an invited to participate in the Premier's Economic Advisory Board and served two terms on the Board of Governors at Cape Breton University, in Nova Scotia.

Al has contributed greatly to the landscape of local charities and community growth. He has lead many capital campaigns, served on community boards—such as the Victoria General Hospital Foundation, Dartmouth Natal Day Committee and the local theatre company board. Al and Mary have been active in the establishment of an alternative-learning center (BridgeCAT) in downtown Dartmouth and have participated in, and lead countless local fundraisers and projects. More recently, Al MacPhee was named the honourary chairman of a campaign they call Idle Free For Our Kids. The aim of this project has been to build awareness for the need to turn ignitions off outside of school and playground areas.

Mr. MacPhee has been a four-time winner of the Jack Smith Award of Excellence for excellence in all aspects of business and customer relations. Time Magazine and MacLean's Magazine have recognized his high standards in business and community involvement by awarding him the Time Magazine Quality Dealers Award, the MacLean's Magazine Dealer of Excellence Award, and the Summit Award. In 2001, the Better Business Bureau of the Maritime Provinces awarded Al with the Community Achievement award, the only Maritime auto dealer to be so honoured. In 2007 he was given the Maritime Business Ethics Award for businesses with over 100 employees. In 2009, Al was inducted into the Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame and, in 2012, he was named in Atlantic Business Magazine's Top 50 CEO's. In 2013, Mr. MacPhee was given the CADA Ambassador Laureate award, as selected by the Ivey School of Business, University of Western Ontario. His fellow dealers from over 3000 new car and truck dealers across Canada nominated him for this award.

Mr. MacPhee has worked hard to situate himself in such a way that he can respond to both philanthropic and business opportunities. He started out his career with nothing. MacPhee and his wife, Mary, built an empire that has been rich in giving and growth in spite of the fact that they built it from nothing. His gifts, not just monetary in nature, are representative of a man whose entrepreneurial thinking has garnered a reputation for being a genuine and articulate innovator, mentor, community builder and supporter of educational initiatives. For these reasons, I felt that he would be a great participant in the exploration of the mind of an entrepreneur.

### **Luc Duval (LD): Founder and President of Duval Group of Companies**

The third participant to introduce is Mr. Luc Duval, Founder and President of Duval Group of Companies, Boucherville, Québec.

I had an opportunity to talk with Luc and a number of others, at a round table discussion on entrepreneurs. His drive, his keen mind, his passion for opportunity, and the strategic way he looked at life reflected the kind of entrepreneurial thinking that peeked my curiosity. His recollections of his own behaviour and thought process made me sure that I wanted to interview him for this study. The most memorable comment from that evening was his response to my question to the spouses: “What is it like to be married to someone who thinks like this?” After many comments such as: “it’s lonely,” “I feel isolated from him because he is in his own mind-world,” “he never can rest so I feel like I can’t enjoy vacations,” and so on; I remember distinctly what Luc said. Pointing to his head, he said, “But you should be in here.” “It never stops, everything presents a possible opportunity, that doesn’t just shut off,” he continued (L. Duval, personal communication, April 15, 2010). Around the same table were two gifted lawyers and an accountant—all high achieving, successful business professionals—responded to the comment by saying that they really could not relate. Only a couple of people around that table really understood.

Luc lived away from home since he was 10 years old. He could not remember a time when he was not interested in business so when he graduated, Luc went to Queens because he knew that was how you got into business. For a short time he went to work for IBM as a market representative and sold computers. Luc felt miserable in this job because he felt that the rules of the company strangled his ability to solve problems in a way that

would most serve the needs of the customer, and not just the carefully tried and true traditions of the company. He met his soon-to-be wife there. She cherished the structure and guidelines. Luc recalled that she felt happy and safe working within those rules.

Luc found a way to own his first business when he was 26 years old, even though he did not have the money. Soon after, he opened 2 more stores. Luc is now the chairman of the Duval Group and it now operates its various concessions in St. Hyacinth (Mercedes-Benz, Smart and Volvo) in Longueil (Volkswagen, Smart) and Boucherville (Toyota, Scion, Mazda, Honda and Mercedes-Benz).

Throughout his career, Luc has served on community and industry related boards. From 1990 to 1996 he served on the Canadian Association of Japanese Automobile Dealers (CAJAD), and then served as president in 1994 –1995. He served on the Corporation of Montréal Automobile (CCAM) from 1992 to 2002. From 1997 to 2000 he represented 17,000 men and women in business worldwide in the Presidents organization (Québec chapter). He recently completed a six-year term on the Canadian Automobile Dealers Association (CADA), and served as Chairman in 2012.

Unlike many of the other participants, Luc was third generation business. The Duval family stores run back 100 years. Luc is similar to most of my interviewees in that he did not inherit the business. Instead he found a way to start his own store and then eventually bought, and rebuilt an empire of his own. He considered himself to be a risk taker, an out of the box thinker and has a proven record of using his keen sense to recognize opportunity. Luc has proven to be a valuable participant in this study.

**Anne-Frederic Duval (AD): Entrepreneurial Student, Babson College**

Introducing Ms. Anne Duval, student, (second year Entrepreneur Studies at

Babson College in Massachusetts) and daughter of Luc Duval.

Early in my conversations with Luc, he remarked that out of his three children, he had one daughter who thought just like him. She had been accepted into the entrepreneurial program at Babson College. I believed that it would be of great value to interview both Luc and Anne. It was a great opportunity to listen to the thinking of a young entrepreneur, but it also provided a unique perspective on her father's way of thinking. I was delighted that she would be home on the date that I was to interview her father, so we were able to conduct an interview with both listening and participating in each other's story.

Anne also attended boarding school through her life. She told stories of being different and having to find ways to fit in. Anne always saw herself in business. She knew from young that she would take over from her father. She said, "Since I was a kid, my parents always said I had plans... I always had ideas, weren't always good ideas, but I had ideas" (AD 1:31.00). Anne "hated the hyper structure school stuff but was able to find out ways... to work the system to ... get good grades and to get even the nuns to like her" (LD 1:02.00). Early in her teens she planned an extended trip to Germany and provided her parents with the itinerary, after everything was arranged and booked, as a way of asking permission. When she applied for university, Anne was accepted at all 13 schools she applied to. She planned to attend Queens because that is where her dad attended. Instead, she took a "blind risk" and enrolled in the entrepreneurship program at Babson (AD 1:13.00). True to what her family considered was her way, she surprised everyone and chose a school that was renown for its entrepreneurial program. She was about to begin her second year in the program at the time of this interview.

She grew up in a home where both parents owned their own stores. Anne affirmed that she identified with her dad because of the way he thought. Her mom and sister, in Anne's words, "think [her] life is crazy!" (AD 54.00). It "was easy to see that she was different from the other two" as she grew up, her dad contended (LD 1:03:00). He never thought of it as entrepreneurial, just as different. He felt that her risk-taking and independent thinking was similar to what he would have done and, "so," Luc continued, "if I consider myself an entrepreneur, then I see that she has a little bit more of an entrepreneurial spirit within her - risk taking and all that stuff" (LD 1:04:00).

Anne was a valuable participant in this study even though her life experience was mostly ahead of her. She proved to be keen, articulate and bright. She knew what she wanted but showed that she was not afraid of the unknown or changes to her plans. I found her to be energized by challenges and opportunities. It was evident that she believed in her ability to successfully take over her father's businesses, look for new opportunities, and grow the business group to new and exciting levels some day. I watched her interest ignite as she listened to stories from her father's life that he had never articulated before. It was valuable to have her affirm her father's characteristics and understandings about himself, especially as she weighs it with her own thinking and hands-on practice at Babson.

**Robert M. Chipman (RC is referencing for transcription designation): Founder and President of McGill-Stevenson Enterprises**

The next entrepreneur I had the honor of interviewing was Mr. Robert M. (RM professional name designation he uses): Founder and President of McGill-Stephenson Enterprises, Winnipeg Manitoba.



RM touched my life, when I least expected, and left a profound mark. My husband and I have had the opportunity to know his son, Steve, and Ruth Chipman for quite some time now. Every time the conversation about this study came up, or about entrepreneurs, someone would always suggest that I interview Steve's father, Robert Megill Chipman; RM, as he preferred to be called.

At the time of our interview, RM was 87. He was the founder of Megill-Stephenson, a diversified company the parent company to sport and entertainment industries (e.g., The Winnipeg Jets), real estate, construction, and the Birchwood Automotive Group. I now look back on that trip to Winnipeg as a rare opportunity to listen to the stories of such an esteemed patriarch- of not only an empire, but of a family. His story and the results of his thinking, cast no doubt upon the fact that he was not only incredibly innovative and influential, but he thought of solutions non-stop, worked hard to overcome setbacks and always had a plan in place—even to the end. But his story also told of one who was altruistic, humble and a committed philanthropist, whose feeling of success would be that he was able to protect and nurture those in his influence.

RM Chipman was born in Calgary, Alberta, in 1926. His father went from working at the Studebaker Corporation to owning a truck store in Vancouver. Two years later they lost everything and the family moved back to Winnipeg—at the time a bigger city with more opportunity—and then on to Kenora, Ontario.

RM was known for responding to adversity with a determination that would guide him through a lifetime of both disappointment and great success. For example, he bought a plating company out of Edmonton, and grew it to being the biggest in Western Canada. He brought an equipment leasing business through one of the most vulnerable economic

times to a portfolio of over a billion dollars. Included in their many other acquisitions, Chipman's company, Megill-Stephenson, is parent to the widely successful "Birchwood Auto Group" and is the primary shareholder in the highly publicized "True North Sports and Entertainment. The Winnipeg Free Press report referred to Chipman as "the greatest entrepreneur this city [Winnipeg] has seen" (Kirbyson, 2013, p.1)

Throughout his life, Robert (RM) talked about the fact that he was always making plans and soon found himself building teams and virtually "selling opportunity" (RC 20.00). RM Chipman's company, Megill-Stephenson, has been on the leading edge both in the business world and in the community. In 2011, one of its divisions True North Sports and Entertainment, in a historical move bought and brought the Atlanta Thrashers back to Winnipeg (the Winnipeg Jets). According to his son, Mark, RM underplays the integral role that he played in this process. "He was home base," said Mark. "He asked the tough questions" (Kirbyson, 2013).

The automobile division of Megill-Stephenson has grown to become Winnipeg's largest network of automotive retailers. It includes 17 franchised operations and represents manufactures such as GMC, Honda, Infiniti, Nissan, BMW, MINI, Land Rover, Jaguar, Volvo, Lexus, Toyota, Kia, Hyundai, and Ford, and 2 collision repair centers. But RM Chipman has not only built an empire, but he had successfully surrounded himself with his family, both in and out of the business. He recognized that the kinds of things they have been able to do are "kind of high profile" he said humbly, but he was quick to be there when he was needed, offer ideas and help find solutions, and give the credit to the talent around him – especially his children (RC 33.00). "It's family," he said. "If we have had success in business, it's the family" (RC 33.00). He had a sincere

desire to see them succeed.

Early in his career, RM served as the National Chair of the GM Dealer Council for two terms. He has also served on the board for the Manitoba Theatre Center, the United Way, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, the Winnipeg Foundation, the Winnipeg Enterprise and the Royal Bank of Canada. Before we ended our interview, RM shared with me the 12 precepts he developed for his life (See Appendix G).

RM's commitment to mentorship was clear, but his desire to give back to his community was evident. His companies have contributed over a million dollars towards local charities like United Way, Kidsport and Cancer care.

In 2006, RM was presented with the Ignatian Challenge Award Recipient. Brennan (2007) described this award is one that is given to alumni who devote their life to bettering family, community and his or her employees.

In 2007, RM Chipman was inducted into the Winnipeg Citizens Hall of Fame. In 2009 and again in 2010, The Globe and Mail, along with Queen's Center for Business Venturing, voted Birchwood group and National Leasing one of the best employers in Canada. Birchwood Group, run by RM's son, Steve, was also named one of the top 50 employers in Canada in 2010.

We grew up trying to emulate our father, explained his son Mark to the Winnipeg Free Press. He was a role model, quiet and efficient; "one of the smartest and wisest human beings... kind, thoughtful and humble" he remembered (06/01/2011). Our father will be remembered as "a pillar upon which many of the principles of our organization are founded, including family, honesty, integrity and hard work." stated his son in an

interview with CBC (Pauls, 2013). RM believed that you should make every challenge an opportunity. And opportunity is what seemed to fuel the relentless drive that propelled him through the good and bad of life.

For me, I was honoured to have had the opportunity to meet and interview RM Chipman. His kind and thought-filled way was reminiscent of what it might feel like to sit before one of the great philosophers of the past. I knew my turn had come to absorb, not just words, but a sense of quiet urgency that we are only here for a short time; that family is our most precious gift; and our legacy consists of more than the material things we leave. Only a few months after our interview, Robert Megill Chipman passed away, leaving just that: a legacy of honor and love. Winnipeg said good-bye to one of the greatest entrepreneurial thinkers of this last generation.

#### **Gordon Rumpel (GR): Founder and President of Rumpel Holdings**

Introducing the next participant that I interviewed, Mr. Gordon Rumpel: Founder and President of Rumpel Holdings Ltd., Calgary AB

Gordon Rumpel was a successful businessman, mentor and philanthropist. He was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, but spent most of his Career in the Calgary area. To local businessmen, Gordon was known as a guy to listen to. Even at 85 years old, he had a sharp money sense and flowing idea bank. Whatever the topic, he was quick to offer valuable solutions that marked him as someone whose thinking just did not stop. His success in both the business and horseracing world, signaled more than just luck.

Gordon was raised in Saskatchewan. He described his growing up years as rebellious. He felt that he was pretty lost. His first job was selling used cars. In 1960, he and his wife, Illa, moved to Calgary. It was only a year and a half later that he was

promoted to used car manager. By 1970 he had determined that he would own his own store. Not only did Gordon develop strategies for dealing with people, but for dealing with change and refusing to take no for an answer. He figured out how to make the twenty thousand dollars that he had in the bank into his own business.

Gordon's goals in life did not include working for someone else. He said that no one told him that he was an entrepreneur, instead, he found out what he needed to know in order to be the master of his own destiny, to own the company (GR 1:35.00). Gordon believed in himself and in his own abilities to problem solve. He felt it was because, as he put it, "I like the movement, I like the action... I'm a hustler and I like that" (GR 34.00).

When he got into the horse business, he did so with what would appear to be nonchalance, when in actuality, he did his homework, studied the breeds and made decisions based on knowledge and a clear reconciliation of his risk. Though every horse Gordon bought was not a winner, hall of famer *On the Road Again* has become a legend and at that time, the richest pacer in history (Rainey, 1999). In 1984 his winnings 1.75 million and included the over the richest Meadowlands Pace to date. His race at Meadowlands could parallel his owner's own life, as "he left from a second tier trailing post position and had to weave his way through traffic to get up for a neck victory in a season's best" (Rainey, 1999). That same year his colt won the title of Overall Pacer of the Year, Triple Crown winner, Colt of the Year, and Canada's Horse of the Year in 1984 and 1985 (Rainey, 1999). The champion's third year winnings were, again, over a million dollars. *On the Road Again* was named "Best older Pacer of the Year" and swept the World Cup Pacing Series as the only horse to win all three races. Road, as Gordon refers to the horse, totaled near three million dollars in winnings before being inducted into the

Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame in 1999. The horse was syndicated for eight million dollars and went to stud. On The Road Again's offspring had earned more than \$68.7 million, fathering Hall of Famer, filly of the year, pacer of the year and Horse of the year, *Rainbow Blue*.

Rumpel's horse, *Matts Scooter* also won the Meadowland Pace. The likelihood of having two winning horses was almost unheard of, especially one that was a high-strung, one trainer horse. In spite of the horse's prickly attitude, it earned close to three million dollars in winnings in the two years he raced. In 1988 *Matts Scooter* was named Pacer of the year and Harness Horse of the year. In 1988 he ran for a world record at the Red Mile in Lexington Kentucky. Before being put to stud, *Matts Scooter* was inducted into the Living Horse Hall of Fame (Kraft, 2006).

Besides his success in business and in the horse world, one of Gordon's last starring roles came as a result of his intimate conversation about his wife of 59 years, Illa. The documentary, *A Special Lady*, earned the 27<sup>th</sup> John Hervey Award for excellence in Harness racing broadcasting (USHWA, 2011). In the documentary, Rumpel told a story of why he named his pacer, *A Special Lady*, after his wife who at that time was suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Told exclusively by Rumpel and his trainer, the piece is an intimate and honest look into the heart of this man.

Even though Gordon Rumpel was 84 years old at the time of the interview, his responses reflected a clear, keen path of thinking. He told of going back into the horse world after his wife passed away. He was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer not long after. Even with this new challenge, "his attitude is so remarkable that it inspired me to get back to owning horses," explained Juravinski, Rumpel's long time friend and

horseracing partner (Howe, 2012).

Examples of his philanthropic attitude resonate through youth and health programs alike (e.g. [Cochraneagle.com](http://Cochraneagle.com); [cochraneyouthtalent.com](http://cochraneyouthtalent.com); [freshstartrecovery.ca](http://freshstartrecovery.ca)). I talked to Gordon about one of the scholarships he established for young people in his wife's name- The Illa Rumpel scholarship. When I asked Gordon if he would ever want the scholarship in his name he said that it was like the festival itself—it is not for the glory of anyone. It is about providing opportunities for children to be able to accomplish what they are passionate about doing! He said, “When I am gone, I will be dust. All that remains are the legacies I leave. I want my legacy to be that I made a difference in someone's life” (Baum, 2013). After talking with those who knew Gordon, and through our conversations, I have come to realize that he has continually inspired and challenged others to do their best. He never quit seeking new ideas and taking opportunities and has always done so with an abandon that is neither naive nor reckless.

This December, Gordon accepted his greatest challenge yet. After organizing what he wanted for his memorial, with a sound mind he asked to be taken off the machine that was keeping him alive. In our last visit with Gordon, I smiled when he offered the nurse the list he had made of ways they could improve the hospital and the care within. Unfortunately the nurse shrugged it off and hurried on. She would have been wise to take it. As in life, Gordon Rumpel was not afraid to risk, and he had clear solutions even for his death. I learned so much from this man and his wife. I will treasure my memories and be grateful that I had an opportunity to hear him tell his story. I will always remember his passion and matter-of-fact logic that guided his memories and his life. I felt it fitting to include the reading that he chose to be remembered by. I smiled when I read it because it

will always remind me of the man (See Appendix H).

**The Honourable Doug Horner (DH): Treasury Board and Minister of Finance for the Alberta Government.**

Introducing my next interview participant, The Honourable Doug Horner:  
President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance for Alberta.

The Honourable Doug Horner has been a recognizable Canadian politician and entrepreneur. He grew up on a farm in Northern Alberta, worked in the oil patch, served in the military, and then completed a business degree in Calgary. Doug did not consider himself an entrepreneur until later in his career when he was asked to describe himself after going into politics. When he thought about it, he could remember, “looking for ways to earn income, because I wanted to do things, you looked at opportunities to create something in an area that someone else wasn’t in because there was an opportunity there” (DH 1.00). It just did not occur to him at the time that it was being entrepreneurial. He and his brother started their own business from an idea his father had, and went on to risk everything he had, including his own safety at times, to make it successful.

In his career, Doug has been instrumental in starting and running 3+ businesses. In 2001 Doug Horner was elected to represent his district in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. In 2004 he was appointed Alberta Agriculture Minister and successfully lead Alberta’s cattle ranchers through the devastating results of the BSE crisis. He was also instrumental in establishing the Rural Alberta Development Fund and the Biofuels Initiative.

During his second term (2006) Premier Stelmack added the role of Minister of Advanced Education and Technology to Horner’s portfolio. During this time his most



notable accomplishments were the creation of programs such as: Alberta Innovates, Campus Alberta and Apply Alberta. He also had the foresight to believe in the potential and value of colleges, and the importance of having them around the planning table. Through the Campus Alberta initiative, he began the process of creation cross campus communication systems that would simplify and enhance the transferring and registering process within Alberta Universities and Colleges.

In addition, Doug has served as the Minister Liaison to the Canadian Forces, chaired the Alberta Government's Information and Communications Technology Implementation Committee and served as the vice chair of the Alberta Grain Commission.

He has always been active in his community Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, the Legion and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Association, just to name a few. In 2010, Mr. Horner was appointed to the position of Deputy Premier of Alberta, and resigned a year later to run for the PC leadership. After the election, he was reappointed to this position. In 2012, Doug Horner was elected to his fourth term as a MLA and was named by the Premier to the post of President of the Treasury Board and Minister of Finance. I was affirmed that Minister Horner would be a great fit for this study when I spoke with one leader who served under Doug's leadership as Minister of Advanced Education. Horner was renown for being able to harness the thinking power of some of the greatest thinkers, entrepreneurs and leaders around him, this entrepreneur recalled. He created think tanks of Chairs from each University, and found ways to hold himself accountable for making change happen and for doing what he said he would do. One chair explained to me that Doug was masterful at building teams and was energized by innovative thinking. In our interview, I was amazed by Minister Horner's willingness to speak vulnerably and

honestly about himself. I also recognized a passion for more fully understanding and engaging the entrepreneurial thinker. I was grateful for his willingness to take time from a very demanding portfolio and schedule, to meet with me. More than ever, I recognized his value in this study.

**John Robinson (JR): Founder and President of Green Drop Ltd**

The next entrepreneur I interviewed was Mr. John Robinson: Founder and President of Green Drop Ltd. and its affiliated companies, Springbank, Alberta. John's companies are situated throughout central Alberta.

John has never worked for anyone else since he was a child when he did chores for his father. "I had an allowance at the ranch, you know growing up as a kid. After that, I was on my own to just make it and I never took a job, well at least there was no 7 to 11" (JR1.00). His first business was while he was still High School. He responded to what he saw was a need for rural people to have music lessons and be able to purchase instruments. He became what he called the "travelling accordion salesman and teacher," he recalled. He would "sign up kids, teach them and sell them instruments and music" (JR 2.00). From there he opened music stores, a big line of equipment, bought land and developed it, and fabricated new equipment for many more companies that he created and ran.

John recognized the need for a new way to farmers to fertilize their crops. So, mid-way through his career, he explored and then fabricated a machine that would place the fertilizer deep in the soil. As a result, he started Green Drop Ltd, which has since expanded into both residential and commercial site operations. Green Drop is the largest independently owned Lawn-care Company in North America and includes seven lawn

operations, as well as ranch and agricultural divisions. To this point, John has started at least 32 different operations. He was and is forever looking for opportunity and is renowned for both his ability to bring his ideas to reality but also for consistently seeking out new solutions and possible opportunities.

John is a highly respected businessman and entrepreneur in Alberta. He has been recognized in the Calgary area for his ability to adapt and survive the ever-changing economic environment. In 2002, John was honoured for his ability to adapt, survive, and reach “the pinnacle of success” in the agriculture industry (2002, p. 1). He was honoured along side of businesswoman, and Dragon’s Den star, Arlene Dickinson.

His habit of community engagement and support has kept his name on the lips of most business and community people in the Calgary area. I approached John because of his unprecedented reputation in the community as an entrepreneur and community supporter. What I would find was a bright and caring man who has an uncanny ability to identify areas of need, think of solutions and actually create the tools and machinery needed to solve the issue. He was a perfect participant for this study because his interests are rich and diverse, and he is an example of someone who lives each day with purposeful intent to create or complete something new.

**Cathy Bennett (CB): Founder and President of Bennett Group of Companies**

My last introduction, and participant, is Ms. Cathy Bennett: Founder and President, CEO and Founder of Bennett Group of Companies, St. John’s, Newfoundland.

After I interviewed Al MacPhee, he mentioned Cathy to me. Based on the inquiry I was making, Al believed that she would be someone I needed to talk to. I read about her on the Internet and felt convinced that from her portfolio of accomplishments, she would

indeed be someone I should at least talk to. I contacted her via e-mail and then set up an interview at her office in St. John's Newfoundland. I would soon find out that Cathy was down to earth, enjoyable, and so easy to talk to. After welcoming me to St. John's, she said, "Entrepreneurs do think differently than other people" (CB1.00). In just moments, I felt totally engulfed in a contagion that could be recognizable as a type of drive that had propel her headlong into innovation and challenges. I would soon be immersed in a story of drive, heartache and a whole lot of amazing. I wanted to go start something!

Cathy was the founder of the fifth-fastest-growing company in Atlantic Canada with \$35-million in annual revenue. The company has employed between 800-1200 people at any particular time. The crown jewel of her empire has been Bennett Restaurants, which included eight St John's area McDonald's restaurants. In addition, her portfolio has also included businesses such as a construction, and commercial land and building company, to name a few.

When Cathy was 16, she got her first part time job at the MacDonald's restaurant chain that she would eventually buy. Cathy would later form Bennett Group of Companies as a catalyst for new companies to silo from. Cathy became the president and CEO of a multimillion-dollar company as she predicted. The energies of her growth plan have been propelled by her keen desire to care for the welfare of her people and their talent development as workers. Her goals for her businesses have been to nurture a culture of flexibility that will openly breed innovation and creativity. She has committed to the education and personal development of her employees, with hope that they will contribute positively to their family units and to their communities.

More recently Cathy recognized the need for an international recruitment

company and set up offices in Ireland, the Philippines and Morocco. In conjunction with this, she formed a joint venture with Diamond Global Recruitment Center to head up its Eastern Canada division. She also has mentored young entrepreneurs and has been known to partner with them as a way to help them succeed in their business venture.

In addition to her companies, Cathy has served on the board of the Shaw Group of Companies, director on the board of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, as well as the Bull Arm Corporation. Until recently she served on the boards of the New Millennium Iron Ore Corporation and Nell Aliant, and served four years as director and then Chair of NALCOR Energy. She is a member of the Labrador North Chamber of Commerce, Newfoundland and Labrador Employers Council and Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador. She is also a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Oil Industry Association and past president of the St. John's Board of Trade.

Cathy served as a Governor of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council and treasurer of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. She is Chair of the International Women's Forum for Newfoundland Labrador and a director of the provincial chapter of the Institute of Corporate Directors. Her interest in education has driven her to sit on the Advisory Board for The Learning Partnership as well as the Business Advisory Group at Memorial's Faculty of Business. In addition, Cathy has been instrumental in bringing Ronald McDonald House to Newfoundland and Labrador, chairs the capital campaign committee and serves as vice chair of the program itself. She chairs the St. John's Clean and Beautiful program and serves as a director on the Festival 500 Board, as well as the Business and the Arts Board. In July of 2013, she announced her intention to run for leader of the Liberal party with the ultimate goal of leading the province.

Among her many accomplishments, Bennett has been honored as a leader, employer and entrepreneur. In 2008, Cathy won a Pinnacle Award from the Institute of Business Communicators. In 2009, as well as in 2011, The Employers Council of Newfoundland named her Employer of Distinction.

In 2012 Cathy became a Paul Harris Fellow, won a NLOWE Entrepreneurial Excellence Award, and a Community Impact Award. This same year she was named one of the Top 25 Women of Influence for Canada. In 2013 she received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. And was named, for the fourth year in a row, one of Atlantic Business Magazine's Top 50 CEOs. From the top 50, she was the first woman to ever be chosen as CEO of the Year. This award is given to the CEO who is deemed by the judges to have had the most outstanding accomplishments during the past year. When I asked her about celebrating this accomplishment, she said that she always knew she would win this. It was simply a matter of when. Cathy's most notable contribution to this study is in that she has spent many years trying to unpack her differences, not only as a woman in a world that seemed to accept men more readily, but as a different kind of thinker.

### **Reducing the Data Using Research Questions**

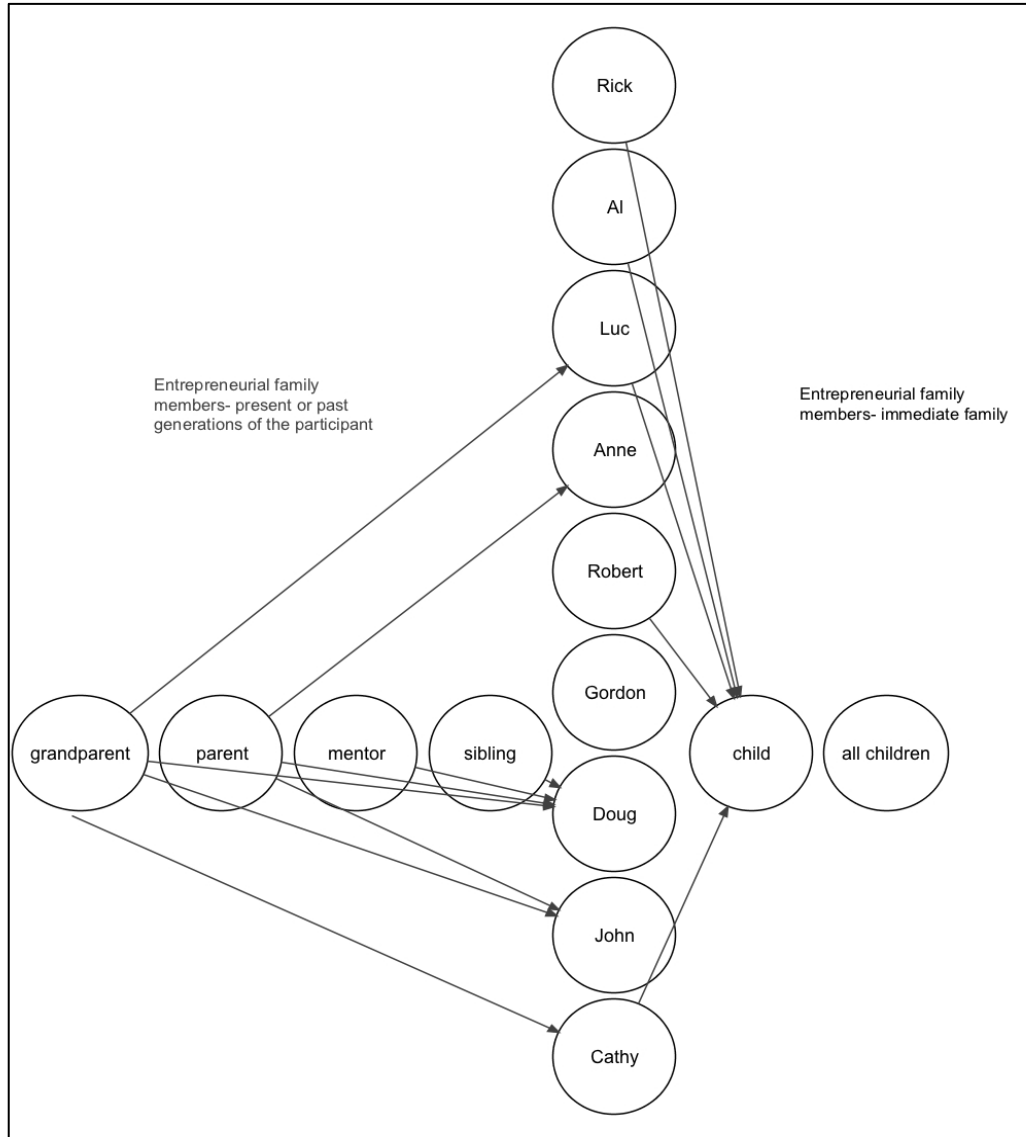
Following the semi-structured interviews, the recordings were transcribed and reduced to uncover meaning units (Giorgi, 2012) and themes. The data were sorted to identify significant statements that correlated to the research question (s). In doing so, key statements were given equal weight and significance (Moustakas, 1994). The correlated meaning units and themes will be discussed below, using the research questions as an organizational guide.

## **Can Entrepreneurial Thinking Be Taught?**

Participants were asked to explore thoughts and remembrances as he or she reflected on their personal development as entrepreneurs. Specific questions were asked regarding entrepreneurial role models, the value of their educational experience toward becoming more entrepreneurial, and perception of personal development as someone who thinks entrepreneurially. The following sections summarize the perceptions of each participant as he or she was asked to remember their own development either directly or indirectly.

### **Participant perceptions of role models.**

None of the participants remembered if he or she had ever consciously tried to understand how he or she had learned to think entrepreneurially, though there were stories of family members (past and present) who were entrepreneurial. The interview questions were attempts to draw out memories of entrepreneurs in their past and present that may have influenced them. This could offer insight into how to replicate mentorship and nurture entrepreneurship. The following diagram represents participant responses and stories.



**Figure 4.1.** Participant's perception of entrepreneurial role models past and present.

The above figure provides a summary of the participant responses and brings to mind the idea that only a few of these participants had entrepreneurial grandparents; fewer still had entrepreneurial parents. One participant gave an example of one possible entrepreneurial mentor and another could identify at least one sibling as being entrepreneurial. The right side of the figure shows how many of these participants could identify at least one of their own children as entrepreneurial. None of the participants felt



that more than one of their children was entrepreneurial. It should be noted that two participants only had one living child, and one participant was not a parent of any children.

I asked questions that would encourage the participants to reflect on who nurtured their entrepreneurial abilities. I most specifically asked about grandparents, parents, and other people who had built into their life. I have given examples of responses and from participants, in the order in which he or she was interviewed.

***Participant reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Richard did not remember a grandparent or a parent who he would have considered to be entrepreneurial. His mother's parents spent their life working a farm with the goal of providing food and shelter for ten children. The children were expected to work to support expenses and help provide food and clothing for the family unit. Gauthier described his father's parents as hard working blue collar Québécois who worked at jobs until they were able to retire. He felt that they were genuinely happy and did not aspire to any more than what they had and would not, in his thinking, be considered as entrepreneurial.

Rick did not consider his father to be entrepreneurial even though he was instrumental in providing new opportunities to his family outside of Québec. When Richard was young, his father uprooted their family and replanted them in a community where a different language was spoken, where he knew no other person outside of his immediate family, and where he was forced to sink or swim in a school with teachers who did not speak a language he understood. Richard's description of an

entrepreneur did not fit his father. He “was very comfortable in corporate life and the parameters and the boundaries that corporate life provides,” Rick recalled of his father, “There is an element of safety there” (RG [2] 18.00). On the other hand, “When you are an entrepreneur,” he suggested, “you make up the rules, you devise the policies, you invent the parameters, so you’re not as constrained by them as you might be when you’re in a big box like a major corporation” (RG [2] 19.00). For this reason, Gauthier argued that his father was not entrepreneurial.

Gauthier spoke of two specific people who had an impact on his life. The first was his father, and the other was his first boss, Gill La Claire, a “kind of grey haired guy...[who’d] been with the corporation... I’m sure 25 years and he was God in that office” (RG 2.00). He remembered liking that this man was “in charge, he was busy, he’s got all this responsibility, and it all revolves around him and his experience” (RG 2.00). For Rick, this was the first time that he believed that business would give him the opportunity to “wheel and deal, make things happen, and deal with complex issues” (RG 3.00). Soon after, Rick was asked to work for one of the nation’s largest businesses. It was there he learned the long term value of making sacrifices and good choices; both of which would serve him well in his future and as he opened and ran his own company.

None of Richard’s siblings seemed to have any inkling toward an entrepreneurial bent yet they all shared the same experiences and upbringing. His sister had never worked outside the home and, according to Gauthier, had been satisfied with the security that those walls provided. Rick described his other sister as someone whom everyone loved. She is “charismatic, engaging, warm, smart, beautiful,

she is totally focused on her children...and has a job because they need to pay the mortgage” (RG [2] 20.00). His brother has been a great salesman, but according to Rick, “he is happy with that. He’s not looking to be in charge, he’s not looking to lead, he’s not looking to seize the moment, he just wants to be home every night and doesn’t want to work late” (RG [2] 20.00). For Rick, none of those characteristics describe someone who is entrepreneurial.

Rick was my first interview. After I interviewed others, I realized that there was value in knowing if they felt that their children were entrepreneurial and I had missed asking him that. I re-contacted Rick and he graciously emailed me a response.

Gauthier considered his son to be an entrepreneur. In Rick’s estimation, Jason was not only outgoing and charismatic but was at his best when he was heading things up, solving problems and making creative use of every situation. He told of a time when Jason stripped down and sold off the parts of his old skateboard in order to make enough money to buy a new one. He had a knack for wheeling and dealing, Gauthier would recall. He had a passion for business and problem solving, evidenced by the number of times he took his car apart and rebuilt it.

Rick described his daughter as being extremely intelligent, educated and outgoing, but he would not consider her an entrepreneur. He described Jennifer as a humanitarian and a dreamer; someone who was happy to work her way up in the banking industry in order to have the means to raise her children and explore the world. In his mind, and within the scope of this study, she would not necessarily be an entrepreneur.

It did not appear that Rick’s way of thinking had been nurtured by

entrepreneurial thinkers in his past generations, nor did it seem to be identifiable in his children. One could argue that his father pressed him to think bigger by forcing him to step outside his comfort zone, but Rick also recognized that his father was successful because he was a hard worker who found energy and comfort within the boundaries of his specific job and those expectations.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Like Rick, Al also did not remember anyone in his parent's family who might have been considered an entrepreneurial thinker. He was from a large family but did not recognize the way he thought in any of his siblings

Al's parents and grandparents came from farming families in Scotland and he did not remember anything unusual about what either his grandparents or parents might have done. Like Rick's father, Al's father moved his family to a new (in this case) country, where they were forced to speak a different language. According to Al, his father was "a carpenter, quasi-farmer, [and] lumber man in the wintertime" on a piece of land that "grew rocks and lumber" (AM 1.00). For Al, if his father had been an entrepreneurial thinker, with all the lumber on his father's land, he would have at the least built a sawmill. Unlike Rick's father, Al's parents continued to communicate in their childhood language, Gaelic, all of their lives. Al's dad displayed no desire to grow a company or to seek further opportunities. They were poor and barely eked out an existence for the large family.

Al recalled the man who built into his life at an early age. He remembered the day that his boss walked into the staff room and told them all that they would need to turn it around because half of them would not be with them the next year. He

remembered that exact “what are you here for” speech as being the turning point in his life (AM [3] 3.00). That speech would change his life. “I tried to emulate him,” said MacPhee, “I tried to copy him, and I don’t forget for a minute and I ended up buying his very site” (AM [3] 5.00). Unfortunately, Al remembered watching his mentors’ own sons take over the empire and eventually have to sell it off piece by piece. “It’s too bad,” Al remarked, “that wisdom is wasted on the old” (AM [3] 8.00).

Al was the youngest of 14 children. He had siblings who worked as nurses, teachers, electrical, linemen, engineering and one was an administrator for the government. One brother started a trucking business after driving his own truck, and another, according to Al, may have liked to start his own business but was comfortable in a wage situation. Al’s saw his siblings as being satisfied making a living, paying the bills to providing a home for their family, and looking forward to retirement. They did not appear to want to consider other opportunities. To Al, if they were entrepreneurial, none of them acted upon it.

When I asked about his children, he immediately responded that his oldest daughter, Shannon, thought so much like him, though he did not consider her to be entrepreneurial because she was a medical doctor and had not started a business. He described her as driven. As a medical doctor, she is constantly looking for opportunities and problems to solve. “There’s no stopping her,” Al exclaimed, “... she’s always grinding it out, she’s always fighting with the bureaucrats...and there’s no stopping her-it’s just her way” (AM [2] 47.00)! According to MacPhee, she was always in a self-made crisis that would lead her to a life of constantly solving issues around making healing the sick more plausible.

Al recognized that same thinking in the next generation. His young grandson does all the talking and negotiates all the decisions for his sister. He is constantly pushing the limits of rules, of ideas, and of plans. Al recognized that this young boy is quick to see opportunity and solve problems and gave an example of their yearly trip to buy birthday gifts at Toys R Us. After Liam “wheeled and dealt” on a floor model of the little electric car that he wanted, he decided that if it could not be ready today, he would have to leave it (AM [2] 58.00). On his way out, he said “Papa, if they get that going, you should buy that and I’ll keep my hundred dollars” (AM [2] 58.00)! “He’s got more tongue than a man’s boots,” Al surmised (AM [2] 1:02.00).

His oldest son did well in school and was “well equipped for law school or accounting...and got his commerce degree,” said Al (AM [2] 52.00). Though he is running one of Al’s stores, he is happy with a job that allows him to be home on weekends and causes minimal amounts of stress. He has not displayed a desire for more, for new ideas, or for thinking outside of this present situation.

Al described his youngest son as a smart young man who has finished a number of degrees and is seeking what he wants for his life. Al did not see the same unequivocal determination to change or solve things in either of his sons as he did in his daughter.

I asked Al what he felt stopped people from having that drive, from being an entrepreneur? Al responded by saying that having the money, or the opportunity did not drive his oldest son but it also did not stop his daughter. “She couldn’t care less about it,” he said (AM [2] 1:27.00). “Honest to God,” he continued, “She told me today, ‘that’s it! I told these people if they can’t get the proper equipment for these

little children that are coming in in emergencies, I'm going to replace them! I'll go to Boston. I'll go to Calgary!'" (AM [2] 1:27.00). She has always found new ways for children to get well. According to Al, that seemed to be her driver.

When I asked Al if he that he was different from his wife, Mary, this is how he responded:

She's totally opposite. She would never venture a dollar on what is a sure bet of \$1000 return. She has no desire. She finished her schooling, her college, her university and got her teachers degree...she's totally satisfied with that. If she'd married a teacher, both of them would have retired at 55, got a pension, and they'd canoe and do whatever, golf and all those things. (AM 34:00)

Throughout the interview, Al referred to Mary's frustration with the fact that he was always going, always seeking out new opportunities, and always setting out to solve the endless issues that never let him rest any day or night. Mary's description paralleled the responses of a number of other interviewees when they spoke of their partner (e.g. Duval, Rumpel, Chipman, Bennett, Robinson, & Horner).

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc Duval spoke of his grandparents' business acumen and entrepreneurial thinking, even in 1920. His grandfather started earning money by buying and selling cars while he was still a young man. He finally went to the head of General Motors to ask for a franchise because he was making a living doing that anyway. He went from there to open more sites, including offsite tire operations and parts. Luc recalled hearing stories about his grandmother doing a lot of the expansions and believed that she was probably as entrepreneurial as her husband. Three generations ago, they were considered to have become "the first multiple site dealer in Canada" (LD 18.00).

Luc's father, and siblings did not share the same entrepreneurial spirit as their

father, and grandparents. Though he felt that his father was a “very astute businessman,” Luc said that he was “not a risk taker” (LD 17.00) and retired at 40 years old “because he couldn’t take the pressure of the ever-changing business that is the car business” (LD 18.00). Interestingly, Luc spoke of his father’s need to over analyze things versus his own way of making decisions based on what he thinks is right. “I can make it work,” Luc confessed while “He [Luc’s father] over analyzes ... I’m doing this and there’s a reason...[not] I just did this because I thought it was the right thing to do” (LD 20.00). Luc could not think of any time that he was nurtured to be the way he is by his parents mostly since he was in boarding schools throughout his life.

Luc could not think of a mentor in his life. He learned how to run a business at college but as far as he could think, it was watching what he did not want to be, that influenced him the most. As an example, Luc spoke of his early years at IBM and the restrictions that he was told to adhere to. He was not allowed to solve a problem differently than the way they always did it. His boss was not empowered to make decisions outside of the corporation’s way and advancement was only made possible when someone left. Luc chose to leave and begin his own business where he could devise solutions that could be outside of the corporate box.

Luc felt like he was the only one of his siblings to have an aptitude for possibilities. His brother started in the car business as well. “He was a car nut,” Luc explained. “He knows everything about cars, racing, engines and tires, everything. I know nothing,” Luc continued (LD 41.00). In the 1990’s when their father retired, Luc’s brother bought the store. After eight years, according to Luc, his brother gave Luc the keys for the store and went to work on a ski hill. “He’s a nice guy,” said Luc, he’s just not



a boss” (LD 42.00). His sister was brilliant in school, and “methodical, she’s good at numbers,” says Luc, “she’s a smart person” but does not feel comfortable working outside the box (LD 46.00). She worked for her dad and for Luc in the accounting department but then left to have her children and has continued to do accounting for a not-for-profit (plural) group. Luc did not necessarily see his siblings as entrepreneurial even though they had the same upbringing and had the same opportunities to the business as he.

Luc described his three children as being very different. His oldest daughter, while brilliant in school, needed structure. “You can never have enough structure for her life,” he recalled (LD 50.00). “It has to be very, very organized and she can only do one thing at a time...She now works in a law firm as a paralegal” said Luc (LD 50.00). “Balance for her is difficult,” he explained, “she can’t take care of the dog and work at the same time” (LD 51.00). “She’s 23 and she just moved out,” said Luc (LD 50.00). So, “is she an entrepreneur?” Luc continued, “No, no, no, no, no! She probably couldn’t even work for an entrepreneur...she would have a nervous breakdown” (LD 54.00).

Luc described his son as brilliant as well, while he was young and still finding himself. “He wants to go into medicine and become a surgeon of some kind,” said Luc (LD 57.00). Luc can see him doing it because his son likes facts and likes to know how things are made. Luc described him a somewhat of a loner and “an intellect” (LD 56.00 and 57.00).

Luc considered Anne to be the only one of his children who has, what he called an “entrepreneurial flame” (LD 50.00). “She is adaptable to different situations,” explained Luc (LD 1:03.00). When she worked for him, he recalled, “I saw a lot of her thinking, or

a lot of her actions resemble a lot of what I would have done” (LD 1:03.00). Luc described only one of his three children as entrepreneurial, yet she was still in university and had not yet started her career.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

I believe that I saw Anne develop a greater awareness of her family and their entrepreneurial differences as the interview progressed. Early she verbalized that her grandfather was different than her father, though the realization that it might be whether or not he was entrepreneurial or not, seemed to develop more clearly as she listened to her father’s story and melded it with her own experience.

Earlier, it was mentioned that Anne’s grandparents, (Luc’s parents) did not appear to be entrepreneurial. For Anne, it was interesting to watch her listen to her father’s description and see the instant recognition of what he was saying and how it seemed, for the first time, to make sense in the lens of entrepreneurial thinking. Anne affirmed her grandfather’s need to have a reason for each decision, and not because he had a sense that it was the right thing to do as she and her father would have. “You can tell that by just talking to him,” Anne remarked (AD 20.00). She immediately recognized the differences that she saw in the way her grandparents’ thought compared to both her own thinking and her father’s.

Anne had distinctive ideas of the way her parents’ thought especially as it related to business since they both own and run their own stores. Interestingly, she could relate to one and not the other when it came to entrepreneurial thinking. Anne recognized her father as an entrepreneurial thinker. They both felt that they were solution finders and adapted to different situations and easily.

Anne did not believe that her mom was entrepreneurial in her thinking. Anne described her mom as one who “needs to be safe. If there is something that she does not know the outcome of it, she’ll lose sleep over it and she doesn’t sleep for days” (AD 1:33.00). “Yes, she is different” responded Anne. “She won’t try it; she’ll wait until it’s tested,” she continued, “There are ways that you could say it’s better, sometimes you could say it’s worse, it’s just different, different” (AD 1:34.00). Her mom flourished at her job at IBM for 20 years. She loved the structure and the safety of working within the organization. Her dad was miserable, for the very reasons her mom felt secure there and, consequently, quit after four years. Anne recognized that her mom ran her business differently than her dad. Her mom did things from the perspective of established processes and structure that comes from her need to be safe in this changing and demanding industry.

Anne believed that her father had been her role model, though it seemed that it was mostly because she wanted to run his store when she grew up. She could remember believing at a very young age that she would take over his businesses. “I can remember I would tell people I want to be like my dad because I want to be happy..., you know it all made sense,” said Anne (AD 1:12.00). She met the banker when she was very young and told him that she wanted to do exactly what her dad did. The banker was smart enough to give her his business card. Anne could understand how her dad ran his stores, and felt the most like he understood her own motivations and crazy ideas. As a child, she would approach her dad to tell of new ideas, like going to Germany for two months. She found a place to stay, she found a place to work, found a school, and then e-mailed her parents to ask permission to go. She always felt like her dad would support her in what she

planned—that he had faith in her ideas.

Her brother was bullied at school so he went to the school that Anne suggested. He “will follow the things that I tell him. If I tell him that it’s the right thing for him, he usually goes for it” (AD 56:00). Her sister did not understand her, and Anne did not fit into the structure of her sister’s world either. Anne was energized by new ideas, possibilities and change. Karen was stimulated by consistency and being able to do one thing at a time.

Anne does not have children so she could only consider what her own family structure was like when she was a young girl. She remembered devising ways to make money at a very early age and getting her siblings to buy in to her schemes. She remembered the dynamics of the conversations with her parents as a young child and especially how her dad helped her to understand the profit loss system after she had sold the family supply of water and juice bottles. Like her dad, Anne is not afraid to try new things.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert spoke little of his grandparents but talked a great deal about his father, and his lack of business sense. Neither his father nor his mother was entrepreneurial. In fact, RM called his father a “champion spender” (RC 7.00). His father sold cars in the summer and worked in the mines in the winter. When Robert was eight or nine, his father bought him a bike but only put the deposit down. According to RM, “he put the five dollar down payment down and I assumed the risk” (RC 7.00). A young Robert found odd jobs in order to pay for his bike. He talked about this being his first exposure to risk and obligation.

None of RM's siblings were entrepreneurial. He spoke of his sisters both being passive and did not work outside the home. One married a guy who was, what Robert called, a "go getter" (RC 41.00). The other lived a very tough life until she actually won the lottery. His brother spent his life as a navy seaman. None showed the same relentless drive that Robert did, even as a young boy.

RM did not identify anyone as being a mentor as such. He remembered that early in his life he ran some of his opportunity ideas by his brother-in-law. Through his career, he recalled that on many occasions he also took suggestions by trusted lawyers and accountants who would suggest business opportunities for investment. For RM, his faith and his family were the source of strength and support that he needed through every piece of his long and successful career.

Of his children, while they are all accomplished business people, they are not all what he would call risk-takers. His oldest son is brilliant. "His intention was to be a lawyer and in the eleventh hour he turned away from law into education," recalled RM (RC 53.00). His son's desire to see real change in the school system was thwarted by talk of salary negotiations instead of improving teaching practice. Not long after he went back to law. Chipman described his oldest son by saying, "he's very detailed orientated. He was a great student - he's got a photographic memory...he's so smart that you can give him a phone number and he remembers it for life. He's really a first class steward, he minds the store really well, but to increase the size of the store, he needs a nudge" (RC 54.00 - 55.00).

RM believed that his second son is most like his father. According to Chipman, this son "loves to do deals [and] loves to respond to opportunities" (RC 55.00). He

described him as a “real risk-taker [who] gets along with everybody” (RC 56.00). He ran the real estate, contracting and high-risk pieces of the business.

His third son was described as very bright and highly recognized in the business community, yet he was more conservative, according to RM. Though “the fact that we have an NHL team in Winnipeg is all to his credit,” explained Chipman. He believed that his son’s “conservative element” anchored him through the challenges and sleepless nights of such a massive endeavor (RC 57.00).

His daughter has been “a very successful television producer...was the vice president of programming for the women’s television network... and the president of the National Screen Institute” but not a risk-taker, according to RM (RC 59.00). Chipman believed that she is brilliant at what she does, but remains happy with less risk. “I think they all felt that their father took enough risk for them,” RM contended, (RC 59.00). He could easily identify entrepreneurial thinking in at least one of his children, even though Chipman referred to them all as brilliant business and community leaders who contribute in substantial ways to build and sustain the massive family empire.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon’s grandparents and great grandparents started businesses as early as the eighteen hundreds. He knew his great grandfather started a bar and a restaurant but he is not sure what ever happened to him. His grandparents risked everything to move to another country. In Canada, Gordon’s grandfather started a number of businesses (blacksmith shops, livery stable, farms) but lost everything in the depression. According to Rumpel, his grandfather might have been entrepreneurial but he also could have been working simply doing what he knew how to do in a new country.

He did not consider his father an entrepreneur. According to Gordon, “The biggest risk my father took in his life was to become a commissioned salesman. That’s it, but he was good at it” (GR12.00). All of his father’s siblings worked for others.

Gordon talked of a couple people in his life that he would consider a mentor. Don Brown was someone who was in his court, who believed in him, and helped him get his start in his first business. In addition, Gordon was not afraid to ask for advice. He joined dealer groups to hold him accountable for the health of each department. He told about a time, early in his career, when he recognized someone who was doing well in an area he was struggling. “I told him I would buy him the best steak in town if he would tell me what I was doing wrong in my dealership,” said Gordon (GR 22.00). Buy the steak he did, and Gordon went on to learn a valuable business lesson that would serve him well through his career.

Gordon was an only child, so there were no siblings to consider. He has one son who Gordon refers to as a very successful businessman, but not necessarily a conscious risk taker. His son is known for his history of solid business acumen, his ability to build a successful team, make solid investments, help others to be successful, and to give generously to others. In an attempt to clarify this, I was able to contact his son. When I asked him if opportunities felt like more like a rush for him or a business decision, he responded by saying that it was a business decision. He recognized that for some people there would be a rush when they were on the edge of the latest and greatest. He felt that the drive to constantly seek out the untried is either who you are or not. This successful businessman has enjoyed the freedom to make good business decisions, but admitted to getting no little enjoyment from risk, or venturing into the unknown. At the end of the

conversation, I was convinced that the characteristics that his dad had described him by had certainly been the driving force behind his business success.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Doug considered his family's long history of business and politics when he decided that his grandparents were entrepreneurial. His Saskatchewan born grandfather had a reputation for being a tough negotiator, and a shrewd horse trader. Horner recalled that there was a long history of family who did trading, both locally and internationally like Doug, himself. Like generations to come, his grandfather ended up in politics as an appointed Senator. His grandparents on Doug's mother's side had a history of being doctors and military personnel.

Horner's dad had a diverse career that was driven by the tough years for business and professional occupations. His dad served on a navy vessel in World War II and then studied medicine after the war. "He had to be entrepreneurial," explained Doug, "He was a doctor in an age when doctors were private business people. So in the late fifties he took a lot of risks going up to the small town of Barrhead" (DH 3.00). He then risked a now secure business to enter politics. "It was a huge risk," recalled Horner, "because he was putting his practice at risk. But he saw an opportunity...the entrepreneurial piece of wanting to serve in public life and also running your own business as a family physician" (DH 4.00). "Somebody told me once," said Doug, "that most entrepreneurs have been close to bankruptcy or bankrupt at least once, because you take risks. Some are going to work and some aren't" (DH 11.00). Doug watched his father take risks, put it all on the line for opportunities that he felt were worth the try.



The mentors in Doug's life included his father, various college professors and those he grew up watching. Doug's father encouraged his children to always do what they really believe in. "He used to joke," recalled Horner, "that there was no such word as *can't*... if you think you want to do something- just go do it!" (DH 30.00). Doug felt that his father's mindset came from an in-born belief in supporting people and encouraging potential.

Doug also spoke of his mentors within the college program at SAIT. He valued the opportunity to talk to people who "have been there, done that" (DH 11.00). He really liked the idea that the teachers were from the industry and often still in the industry. He recalled a particular instructor who was a TEXACO marketing person, and an accounting teacher who had his own firm in Calgary. Doug valued the marketing and accounting advice, but also so much more of the experience that they could offer.

Peter Loughheed and local business people became valuable mentors for this young man through his life. There were advantages of growing up in a home where generations of people before him were not only in business for themselves, but were at the heart of new and innovative ways of changing the world of politics. Doug remembered watching these foundational leaders and the way they lived their life and how they responded to and acted upon change. He remembered how young he was when he recognized the dedication that it took to start, run and take the risks in your own business as he watched local entrepreneurs go through the good and bad.

Doug's brothers, a group of highly successful businessmen, each responded differently in how they viewed risk and in spite of growing up in the same home with the same influences. Two of his brothers joined him in his business risks. Doug's dad taught

them “If you can dream, you can do it” he recalled (DH 32.00). He was confident that each of his brothers, including himself, has lived their dreams.

I asked the minister about his children. He described his daughter as possibly closer to “entrepreneur-like” and felt that his son may get there as he gets “a little more life experience” (DH 45.00). Doug’s daughter is “very theatrical” he explained (DH 47.00). She has entered the Legal Assistant program for the practicalities of job possibilities only. His son has shown an aptitude for problem solving in business but does not like business at this point in his life. For Doug, it was hard to predict whether or not these two young people will become entrepreneurial thinkers.

***John Robinson (JR).***

When I asked John about his grandparents, parents and family, he was quick to tell about the farming and ranching history that undergirded his family for generations. His grandparents on his father’s side might have been entrepreneurial, he recalled, but it was more evident on his mother’s side. Her father was a tremendous entrepreneur. He came from Ireland and worked a full year for one horse and a saddle. He built a huge farming operation, and to supplement it through the Great Depression, he built a dairy farm, milked cows and trapped and shot coyotes. He found a market for coyote hides in Europe that would pay him more for a hide than a cow. As children, he and his brothers could remember seeing “all of those coyote hides drying out” (JR [2] 7.00). His grandfather would “be one of the great entrepreneurs that came through the depression and ended up in his lifetime with 32 sections of land in Springbank and founded a huge operation,” John responded (JR [2] 8.00).

His parents were also pioneers in the Springbank area and began by farming and

ranching. John's father started the first truck route west of Calgary that would transport milk products and fuel. This supplemented their living and responded to the need of the neighbors. His father also bought a school bus, and then purchased two more, as the boys were old enough to drive. His dad's siblings on the other hand never had "an aggressive desire to try different things," claimed John (JR [2] 1.00).

Like many of the interviewees before, Robinson sought out a mentor to help him develop in his business skills. In the 80s, he met a man named Dan Johnson who, in John's estimation was a great entrepreneur. He started "modular home plants... and many other things" (JR [2] 9.00). After selling his companies, he worked as the right hand man to one of Canada's top entrepreneurs, Jim Pattison. John remembered a time when he realized that he was in "tremendous financial trouble, and I asked Danny, I think I'm broke Danny, you need to have a look at what I'm doing" (JR [2] 10.00). Dan took John under his wings and gave him a system by which he could "judge everything on the return on invested capital" (JR [2] 10.00). Understanding and implementing this formula has allowed John to be prosperous in every one of his entrepreneurial endeavors since.

As much as John could figure, his siblings were not entrepreneurial thinkers. "They work in the business," he explained, "but they just don't have that desire" (JR [2] 2.00) or "seem to be motivated to start something" (JR [2] 1.00). John explained that if a person "tries something and it's not successful, two things can happen to you: one is that you can learn and try to pick yourself up and go one, or it can scare you and you get a little conservative over that experience (JR [2] 3.00). He believed that they had a couple of those experiences and they were happy not to risk.

John has two children and two stepchildren. John believed that his son and

daughter are tremendously creative but did not “have the passion risk” that he does (JR [2] 56.00). His son’s strengths were seen in the operations of his businesses and in his consistent follow-through. His daughters, in California, started a clothing store, and in two years, closed it down and just walked away. He more recently helped his stepdaughter and her husband buy a business. He has it set up right so if it something happens to it, they would not lose everything.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy spoke of an entrepreneurial grandfather and the stories that she had heard about the innovative way he survived the 30s and 40s. Cathy’s grandfather was a garbage collector in St. John’s. He had nine children and barely eked out enough to keep them all fed. But what she remembered about the stories was that he would go through the garbage “and he would salvage stuff and he would sell it and he would make a buck here ...and there. How do you get more out of something, right?” she said, “So I always think if Papa was around he’d think it was okay that I was a little aggressive. He certainly was” (CB 18.00)!

Cathy did not see her parents as being entrepreneurial. Her father was a pharmacist and opened his own drug store, because it seemed like a natural thing to do after you have worked for other people a length of time. She recalled, “he was in business because he was a pharmacist, and pharmacy was his passion” (CB 17.00). She remembered that her father made decisions that were good, “but he agonized over them. He just agonized over them,” Cathy recalled (CB 17.00). Problems weighed heavy on her mom as well, and Cathy remembered that, “solutions always seemed to be hard for her to find, so, she’d get there but it was a

struggle” (CB 16.00). In contrast, Cathy considered herself as someone who does not agonize over decisions because, “worse case scenario doesn’t scare me that much” she resolved (CB 17.00).

Cathy referred to a number of people who she learned from and who encouraged her by believing in her. The first was an entrepreneur named Harry Steel. She remembered how often Harry would come in and just chat. She was drawn to him because of his passion for opportunities and his never ending well of ideas. Cathy saw a man who was “really full of ideas and not just ideas about his own business but is passionate about ideas for my business” (CB 20.00).

Another mentorship opportunity that she felt was extremely valuable was an opportunity to sit on three corporate boards. “I learned an awful lot at those board tables,” she told, “around how to be confident and work in an environment that was very foreign” (CB 25.00). She recalled the how intimidating she felt the first time that she walked into a boardroom filled with lawyers and business veterans. Her first instinct was to determine how she could “level the playing field somehow” (CB 26.00). She quickly considered her own strengths and offered to go in the field and have a look at their operations as part of her orientation. She came back to the next meeting, with a list of at least 20 things that could make it easier for the technicians and cost save for the company. She believed that she learned most specifically to “keep leaning in, Cathy, keep pressing in” (CB 27.00). “So now,” she said, “I just always look for – how do I level the playing field and what can I do that’s going to change the dynamic?” (CB 27.00). The second thing that corporate boards did for her was got her “lit up on large companies” Bennett claimed (CB 30.00). The vision that guided the movement toward Bennett Group of Companies came

from this realization. “Because the more expanded we see [entrepreneurs], the more we see and the more we can do...it doesn’t take much to inspire us, our light bulbs go off pretty fast” responded Cathy (CB 31.00).

Cathy did not refer to her brother as being entrepreneurial. He did start a business, but it seemed that he was constantly amazed at how her mind works. Cathy indicated that she believed that at least one of her sons was an entrepreneurial thinker. She had watched her youngest go through what she remembered feeling as a child, the feeling that his ideas were creating extra work for others. She remembered feeling this at school and at home. Her mom would say “let’s settle that down, let’s settle that down. You know Cathy, look we don’t have time to do that this weekend,” Cathy recalled “there was no validation that the idea was of value and that the creativity was worth something” (CB 43.00). So Cathy talked of the ways she has encouraged a “how are you going to make it better” thinking in her boys by “fanning the flame,” said Bennett (CB 42.00). She is watching them figure things out and in this way felt that both boys are benefitting from the fact that she is an entrepreneurial thinker.

Cathy’s husband was not an entrepreneur. On their second date, over a piece of pizza, Cathy told him that he needed to know that she was going to be a McDonald’s operator some day and he needed to think about what that would mean for him. She knew she would be the primary breadwinner, because she knew it would be a multi-million dollar business. “He sat there,” Cathy recalled, “he’s a computer programmer, and he’s like, what” (CB 23.00)? For Cathy, it turned out perfect because he was raised by a hard working mother. The harder Cathy worked, “the more respect and the more support” her husband gave her (CB 23.00).

### **Summary of participants' remembrances of role models.**

For most of the participants there was someone in his or her past that could be considered an entrepreneur, but as in the case of grandparents there was only one instance that a participant would even know them. There was one case where the participant considered his father entrepreneurial. The data provide what I considered to be an interesting disconnect, in that family heritage did not appear to predict or tied to whether one's child would or would not think entrepreneurially. Also I found it fascinating that these entrepreneurs could quickly recognize differences in those who were entrepreneurial and those who were not.

Secondly, as the participants told their story, it occurred to me that they spoke more of entrepreneurs as thinkers and less as simply business owners. As they talked, there seemed to be a greater recognition that all business owners in their past and the present, were not necessarily there because they were entrepreneurial. For many, there appeared to be recognition that business could be a means to a job versus a response to a solution or an idea (e.g., CB, JR, RM, RG, AM, DH, LD).

### **Participants' Perception of Their own Development: The Impact of Education**

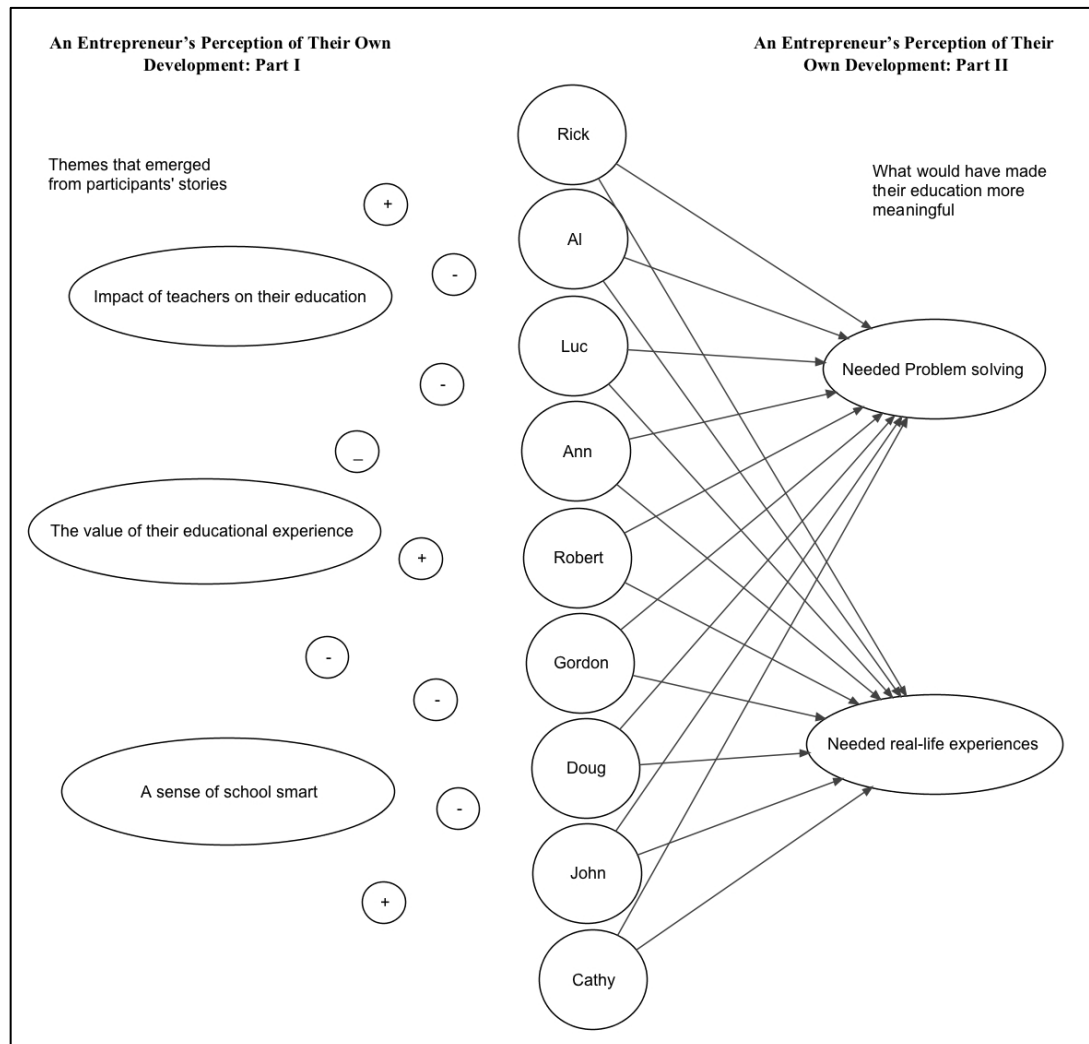
With respect to the research question #1 and the interview data that reflect these entrepreneurs' perceptions of their own development as entrepreneurs, participants described a variety of individual experiences and memories of school. A lot of the experiences from their stories were negative with respect to their perception of formal education, and especially Kindergarten to grade 12. However, in each case, he/she had a good sense as to what would have helped them learn and stay engaged.

Some of the participants dropped out of school or college; others finished only

because he/she perceived that it was the necessary door to open in order to accomplish what he/she really wanted to do. In some cases, completion was directly related to the distinctive and very high expectations of a parent. Some attended college and in one case, the participant regretted not going to post-secondary school because she felt it might have opened more doors for her.

The following figure is a summary of the data that were collected with regard to formal education. The circles on the left side of the diagram represent themes from participant stories as their perception of the impact that education had on their growth as an entrepreneur. The right side of the figure represents participant perception of needs in education, or what he or she believed would have made their educational experience more meaningful.





**Figure 4.2.** Participants' perceptions of formal education and their learning preferences.

Three themes emerged as the participants considered their educational experience. Participants specifically remembered the impact of their teachers, their perceived value of the educational experience, and the perception of whether he or she felt school smart. School smart in this study referred to a perceived ability to be successful in the school curriculum and expectations. These topics garnered both negative and positive responses with participants; and are represented in the diagram by the floating negative and positive bubbles.

The following data were taken from the responses of the participants and includes their remembrances of school. There interview data are reported according to the themes and presented in the sequence order of interviews.

**Remembrances of the impact of teachers.**

All of the participants could remember particular teachers, and most often the exact course that he or she taught, that had made a lasting impact on their education: both positively and/or negatively. In every case, the participants described the teacher and/or the way the course was taught as being significant to whether the entrepreneur had had a positive school experience or even learned to love the specific subject.

***Participant reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Richard spoke the least about his teachers through his grade school experience. In college, however, his favourite professor encouraged him to think outside the constraints of what he could teach. Professor Doyle believed that as an instructor, he was a trainer of the brain. In this way, when a person was presented with a problem that he or she could not have foreseen (which he claimed would be most of the times in the student's lives) he or she could figure it out, or at the least, get through it. Rick never forgot how well that had served him throughout his life.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Al had few fond memories of school and teachers. He seemed to desire things that would interest him and hungered for teachers who would motivate him. Many years later Al's teacher realized that he could have done more to engage the mind of this entrepreneur. Unfortunately at the time, he said that he just never thought of it.

Consequently, Al spent his school years working after school, doing his time and, by the sounds of his stories, did his share of rebelling while he waited for the moment he could get out.

Al remembered a teacher in his daughter's life. Her teacher motivated this entrepreneurial mind of his daughter, drove her beyond her limit and made her "hungry for a pass," explained MacPhee (AM 24.00). Because Al never felt that, he was there simply to get that "little piece of paper. That is all" he recalled (AM [2] 1:32.00).

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc remembered one who made learning exciting. He laughed about how little history and geography would impact what he would later do, but it was the teacher who made it his favorite class. His sister graduated with a geography degree. He laughed as he thought about the idea that she had the same teacher! On the other hand, he talked about how hard he struggled in French (his native tongue). "I should have been good at French but I hated the teacher," Luc remembered (LD 1:37.00).

He loved the problem solving of the physics course and the labs, but he could not do the exams. "I just couldn't do it, it just didn't work. It was just not – my mind didn't think that way," he remembered (LD 38.00).

For Luc, teachers would have, and did, make a difference in how he learned and his feeling of success. His daughter affirmed the fact that he was brilliant and it showed in the finesse at which he ran his empire. Her reaction was reminiscent of mourning, as she listened to her father talk of his inability to feel success at school. Part of her sadness could have been for the struggle to find her own learning sweet spot.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne spoke of her years in boarding school and in college, and could remember, specifically, the teachers who made a difference in her learning. In high school, she talked about how much she loved exploring the possibilities of science and then creating her science fair project. “I knew what I was doing,” she said, “experimenting, taking a risk. I was doing this and maybe it would work and maybe it won’t- but we’ll try again if it doesn’t” (AD 38.00). “I won a science prize on my lab project. And I had the second-best grade in the whole class,” she explained (AD 38.00). Anne was stunned when she could not do the exam the teacher gave. She said that the exam made no sense to her.

In college, Anne had a teacher that she described as “innovative” (AD 1:00.00). Problem solving was the underpinning focus of this economics class. Students were given real life examples to solve. For example, he made them build their stock portfolio. She called her dad for help because she knew nothing about stocks. “His [her teacher] way of teaching us,” she explained, “was to try to figure it out and then the next class he taught us about it” (AD 1:01.00). He taught economics by figuring soccer plays, and tested their knowledge with problem solving examples that they would need to figure out on large cardboard graphs attached to the walls around the classroom. “I loved it! I would show up all the time! I wouldn’t miss his class. I wouldn’t miss,” she recalled (AD 1:02.00).

At an entrepreneurially specific program at Babson, she found that most of her college teachers excelled in their ability to provide learning that was embedded in real life examples. For Anne, having teachers who were able to link learning in the context of real life experience ignited her passion for learning and an innate understanding of the material.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert remembered his school years and especially the group of teachers who made his learning interesting. His struggle in school surfaced when he was moved to a new school, and was moved up a grade, half way through the school year. In spite of the sense that he missed a great deal of material, he felt that the sisters who taught there, did so with a resourcefulness that kept him interested. They taught him more than what he called “the hard scholastic stuff” (RC 51.00). He learned to play the guitar and harmonica. He learned to carve soap and even knit. He believed that it was their ability to involve him in other things that kept him working so hard to stay in school. Robert would go on to receive the school’s top humanitarian award, from that school, as an adult.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon had two significant incidences in his life where a teacher made a lasting impression on him and his future. The first was when he was in grade 11. At the end of grade 11, his teacher decided to give everybody exams. “That was it, I didn’t go,” Gordon recalled, “I just said I’m not going through that. I am not studying for that” (GR 1:22.00). Gordon left school in June of that year, and never finished High School and never graduated.

The next time he went to school, it was to respond to a request by his son’s grade 8 teacher, and his principal, to discuss “vocational” options for his him. The principal said, “We don’t think your son is academically inclined” (GR 1:24.00). His son quit school as well. Gordon finished the story by telling of a chance meeting, years later, between that same principal and his son. When he realized that this young man had

become president of his own very successful company, his only response was: “I can’t believe it” (GR 1:24.00).

It was Gordon’s belief that teachers pigeonholed children and dictated what they could be capable of based on their limited understanding of that child. He believed if his teachers could have honed his and his son’s passion, interests and energy toward what could be valuable learning, his son would have both bought into his learning experience.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Part of Doug’s career portfolio has been to serve as Alberta’s Advanced Education Minister, and then the province’s Finance Minister. Surprisingly, teachers failed to make math relevant. Though he did not feel like it was that hard, he really “hated” it because he just had no interest in anything that did not seem to relate to the real world like “accounting or money” (DH 6.00).

It was not until he was in college that he remembered instructors who had and shared real-life experience and could mentor him in areas that he felt had real world value. It was there that he gained an appreciation for his teachers and really enjoyed the educational experience.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy spent her school years being frustrated by her teachers for two reasons: First, her teachers could not see that she was bored; and, second, they failed to validate her ideas.

I remember [grades] seven, eight, nine, being frustrated because I was bored and frustrated because the teacher was stupid; or what I meant by that was, like, why couldn’t they make this exciting? Why couldn’t they figure out a way? Why couldn’t they figure out I was bored? Right? (CB 40.00)

Cathy found school easy. “I was an honor student. I could have done better,” she recalled

(CB 34.00). There were no teachers that motivated her to do better. Memorization was simple, so she would cram the night before and ace the tests. Subjects that required problem solving energized her. School seemed to get easier for her as she got older because more of the subjects fit naturally into problem solving, and she never had to study to do that.

Teachers seemed to focus less on Cathy's work and more on what they called her attitude. She told of one parent teacher conference where the teacher told her mom that her daughter would roll her eyes at her. "Cathy's doing good in school," her teacher told Cathy's mom, "but, Ms. Murphy, she rolls her eyes at me all the time, all the time. And mom said, 'well you're in good company because she rolls her eyes at her father all the time, too'. And I don't think mom or dad even connected that that kind of, aha, frustration was because I was bored" (CB 40.00). Cathy was constantly frustrated by the fact that neither her parents nor teachers recognized that it was not a bad thing that she thought differently, and those "crazily creative" ideas needed to be validated as worth something (CB 31.00). Cathy, felt that she had no outlet to let "that stuff flow out," and she realized that "what happens is that you give us ten thousand hours of keeping us pent up, so we create coping mechanisms to keep the ideas down" (CB 31.00). Rolling her eyes was one way Cathy let her frustrations out.

Cathy spent much of her younger years trying to figure out why people were frustrated with this 'attitude' they called it. She saw it now in her son. But in her own life, when she would throw those ideas out there, whether it was home or school, "it would always kind of be interpreted that I was trying to create work" (CB 42.00). She remembered one teacher saying "Oh, Cathy, you know we've got enough to do here,

now, we don't need to talk about that... let's keep the lid down, just focus on what we have to learn... Or you know, Cathy that's a really interesting thing you want to do for the prom, but last year we did this" (CB 42.00). So she always had a constant feeling, a "weight," she called it, that she was "throwing out too many ideas and...making people dizzy and spinney," she said (CB 42.00).

### **Summary of the impact of teachers.**

These interview findings provide interesting connections for the participants when teachers encouraged them to think versus told them what to think. Teachers who were trainers of their brain (e.g., RG), those who brought to the class real life experiences (e.g., DH), or those who challenged students with hands-on real-life examples (e.g., AD et al.,) impacted them positively. Unfortunately for the majority of those interviewed, it appeared that teachers wanted them to settle down their ideas in favor of subject objectives and testing. Each participant expressed the notion that both the limitations of structures and testing as assessment left them disengaged and unhappy.

### **Perceived value of their educational experience.**

The second theme, under remembrances of school and still within sub question #1, drew from the stories as the participants reflected the degree to which each one valued his or her educational experience. It was interesting to listen to what participants felt was challenging for entrepreneurs within the school system. All those interviewed either had had children or grandchildren in the school system or were still going to school themselves. The participants were from seven of the ten provinces and territories in Canada. They might be described as a diverse group of professions, whose influence spanned provincial, national and international borders in education, politics and business.



I found it interesting that through their life-long-learning interests that each one in this study enjoyed learning, yet, eight out of the nine of the participants did not like school, or their school experiences.

***Participant Reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Rick's early years of education seemed more reticent of survival than a specific like or dislike of an educational experience. His memory of school revolved around his family's move to an English school when he was in grade 4. He only spoke French and had to work very hard to learn a language at the same time as he mastered the curriculum, since there was no such thing as an ESL (English as a Second Language) program. He recalled how sensitive and "vulnerable" he was as a student during this time (RG: [2] 13.00).

Rick took most of his High School in Québec where exam incentives drove him to "work like hell" he recalled (RG [2] 15.00). Throughout his senior years the school allowed you to be exempt from writing year-end exams if you maintained a 75% average. He recalled how he and his Polish buddy would lock themselves in a room until early morning "and just study like crazy," said Gauthier (RG [2] 16.00). Geography and Trigonometry were tough for him and he resolved, "I don't know that I liked it, I just worked hard at it" (RG [2] 17.00). To this day, "I can't read a map for the life of me," Gauthier confessed, "If you gave me a map I wouldn't tell where the hell I am. I can't get around town" (RG [2] 12.00). In Richard's remembrances, his success in public school was directly related to how hard he worked at memorizing the material.

When I asked Rick about the value of his college experience, he spoke to it not only as a student himself, but as someone who is involved in business colleges across the country in his role as President of a national organization. As a student at Concordia, he demanded of himself good grades. This discipline was reflected in his future jobs and at least part of his success in his present one. He recognized that business schools are certainly pumping out quality young men and women. Within some, there is an entrepreneurial spirit. In business schools, entrepreneurial thinking “needs to be massaged, it needs to be cultivated, but there needs to be an element of entrepreneurship there,” he argued (RG [2] 7.00).

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

When I asked the question of how each participant valued school, more often it was met with a knee jerk reaction that reflected the sentiments of Al MacPhee. He first responded by saying, “I am not interested in school. Never was for an hour” (AM [2] 1:31.00). Al’s wife was a teacher, so even though he has been able to see both sides of the education system, he still felt strongly about the things that kept him from success in school.

The truth of the matter is if the school system is to change, it has to accept that if you can’t hold his attention find out how to instead of holding him back. There are great academic students that don’t get A’s. Don’t bore him until he revolts... [Schools are] not equipping people with the tools to further their lives. (AM [3] 18.00)

He said that school was “Boring! The worst time of my life! Couldn’t stand it! ... I could not stand it for an hour. It was like, what do I have to do to get out of this place. It was like an institution. I could not stand it- I hated every hour of it” (AM [2] 1:30.00). MacPhee remembered clearly how he resolved his time there:

I'm going to give you your time, I'll give you the time I want to, to get a grade out of you, and I'm going home and I'm taking my tractor, I'm loading pulp, I'm yarding it to the road and selling it to the pub guy. I'm doing that because I want cash. I am not interested in school. Never was for an hour (AM [2] 1:31.00).

So, for Al, attending school was solely to get “that little piece of paper” that he believed would get him where he needed to go in his life (AM [2] 1:32.00). There was no joy in learning, save the opportunity to get together with his buddies.

Al also had siblings who are teachers. Like his wife, he found that they had always been careful not to risk. So from the ease and vantage of his “30,000 foot” view, he felt that the way schools are set up to follow guidelines and rules restricts opportunity thinking. He talked about a system that is “straightjacketed into those 190 days in which they get something like eight, or six professional training days” that it is hard to “accommodate people” (AM [3] 20.00). He also joked that it was easier to see what was wrong with anything when you are way up there! In the business world, tenure would never work. If you are doing what you are supposed to, you have a job. If you aren't, you will find a new job. Al argued that tenure could keep school change from happening.

Al also believed that school did not prepare him for being able to handle real world problems. A certain amount of diversity keeps you sharp and watchful, but most young people are not prepared to be able to handle issues when the unexpected comes. For Al, the knowledge that adversity will come, is about the only absolute that we know for sure.

***Luc Duval (LD).***

When I asked Luc how he liked school, he simply responded by saying, “Bored, bored” (LD 32.00). He first attended boarding school at 10 years old and basically lived away from home, in that kind of environment, until he graduated from college. He knew

he wanted to be in business. So he did what he had to do to go to what was considered the best business school. He remembered being bored until he was 21. It was not that he did not like learning, he realized, it was that he was “bored with the process” (LD 35.00). He may have liked learning if he could have been “taught differently,” he resigned (LD 39.00). It bothered him to have to watch his daughter struggle with the same things as he did through school. But then as he watched her enthusiastic engagement in the entrepreneurial program she was now in, he concluded that probably he had been in the wrong school.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne wanted to be like her dad, so she knew that she must find a way to get through school and get into the same college. Anne referred to her school as super structured. She acknowledged the rules, and maneuvered her way around them to be able to do her own thing. That is how she felt she survived. She remembered hating many of her courses. Accounting was one of them. “I didn’t do so well,” she said, “because it was kind of, open your book and read and try to figure it out and memorize all these numbers. I hated it and said I’m never doing anything with numbers” (AD 33.00). And yet, this last summer she took an accounting course that her mom thought was worse, and loved it. She remembered the project that they were given at the beginning of the term. The students were organized into teams and matched to an actual company. They were challenged to find an issue in that company, present it to the CEO, and find a solution using the concepts considered in the class. Though it was stress filled and a lot of work, it energized her. Like the rest of the course, the final exam was a case study. She remembered that it really made sense to her and gave her the opportunity to “put the

numbers to something” she recalled (AD 34.00). For Anne, she was able to survive the education system by finding innovative ways to do her own thing. It was not until she got to college that she found real learning fulfillment through opportunities to problem solve and to put learning up against real life problems.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

School was not a positive experience for Robert. He believed that he was a good student mostly because his father demanded it. He “was an old-style father, you talked only when you were spoken to. If you did something bad, he took out his belt and gave you a licking. If I said that I got the third highest mark in writing, he would fly off the handle, because I did not get first. So he frightened me into being a fairly decent student,” recalled Chipman. But he felt like he had missed a lot of the fundamental grade school things and through Junior High and High School remained a C or D student. RM remembered that he “played all the sports...was interested in public speaking” and liked that piece of school (RC 49.00). In spite of his grade school experience, he liked learning and wished he could have had the opportunity to go to college. Having to “self learn” by trial and error was certainly the harder way, he acknowledged (RC 49.00). The fact that school limits and virtually eliminates those who do not get good marks is a frustration to entrepreneurs who believe that further education could have made them a better businessperson.

For Robert, his “bad grade school experience,” and the lack of opportunity to attend college, added to the number of hard life-experiences that he may have avoided as an entrepreneurial thinker.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon's first reaction to school was similar to most of those I interviewed. "It wasn't a priority with me," Rumpel recalled, "It was boring... very boring... I went because it was a necessity," he responded (GR 1:21:00). Gordon could not think of a time when school interested him. He looked back on those years with the feeling that he "really was a lost soul to most degrees. I would say I was a failure... I'll say kind of a rebel without a cause, to put it mildly" he responded thoughtfully (GR 4.00). And when Gordon dropped out of school in grade 11, he simply started working full time at the job he was already doing at night after school.

In his experience, trades schools run a better chance of producing people who start their own businesses. Because he did not finish school, there was not an option to go to college. In this way, failure in school directly impacted young entrepreneurs. At the same time, both he and his son are examples of successful people who were not limited by school completion. Gordon is an example of how entrepreneurial thinkers will make it happen in spite of roadblocks. He was quick to recognize when he needed help and was always on the lookout for people who could give him ideas, share with him best practices and help him figure out ways to learn what he needed to know to run a successful business, and eventually, an empire.

In the same way, Gordon recognized that completing school was not always enough. He found that young people are limited by marks and teacher expectations. Both as a student, and then as a parent, Gordon felt like the educational system "puts children in a pigeonhole, of some degree" and by doing so, determines what they can or cannot do based on what they feel the child is capable of (GR 1:25.00). "They don't live with that

person or see that kid 12 hours a day,” argued Rumpel, “only the school hours, only his behavior in school and what he is interested in” (GR 1:26.00). For Gordon, school was an unfair assessment of potential and ability that was not based on the child’s interest but on the interest of a system. Possibly low expectations lead children to live up to those expectations. According to Gordon, his son had a passion “and he’ll tell you that every bit of energy that he had pivoted on it. Not on school” he explained (GR 1:27.00). “There are things on the street that the school doesn’t teach” (GR 1:23.00). He said, “it [school] didn’t do anything for me” (GR 1:25.00).

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Doug had a similar reaction to school as other participants, but he also shared an interesting perspective of education as a former Minister of Advanced Education for the Province of Alberta. Because of his past portfolio, Minister Horner provided an additional perspective that included a more specific look into the system of education.

I asked Doug about his school experience. He laughed and said, “I don’t think my school was something I wanted to talk about” (DH 5.00). He went on to describe his experience in the k-12 system as a necessary step that he needed to get through in order to get to what he really wanted to get to. Even though he has been extremely successful in both business and his public life, he admits that as a less than ambitious student. He had other interests so he admitted that he could “figure out a way to get it [school] done with the least amount of effort” (DH 5.00). He said, “I knew what I needed to achieve to get to that next step, and that’s really what I was after” (DH 5.00).

Doug recognized the difficulties surrounding teaching entrepreneurs in schools. First, it would be important to understand entrepreneurs in order to teach them. He

believed that is not always the person with the “85% that may be the entrepreneurial thinker in your classroom,” Doug argued, “it may be the guy who convinced half of the class to go and do something” (DH 18.00). Motivating others to follow your idea is a huge part of being an entrepreneur.

Second, often it is easier to understand entrepreneurs if you are one, he contended. The problem lies in a belief, shared with his brother who is a teacher, that “if you are a teacher and you have an entrepreneurial spirit, you don’t stay a teacher” (DH 13.00). He watched many try out their interests through the summer and eventually it does more for them than teaching, and they leave the system.

Lastly, education students are not being taught that “private enterprise is good and the profit motive is not bad thing, and it is good to go after a risk at the risk of things happening to you” (DH 19.00). Instead, our education students are given “almost, an indoctrination of the ATA and the principles of it, and going back to the history of union activism...There’s nothing that is going to stifle the entrepreneur in you faster than that,” he argued (DH 20.00).

***John Robinson (DH).***

When I asked John about school, he answered without having to think very hard. It was “Boring! I hated it!” John responded (JR 52.00). Yet, while he was in High School, he recognized and created his first business opportunity. He ran this business, worked on the farm and was still able to do well enough to go to college. Like Doug, he did not do well in the subjects that he could not see a practical use for. He found it frustrating that he graduated from school and still could not reconcile a checkbook. “I didn’t know anything,” John recalled with frustration, and just felt like he was “no good at school” (JR 52.00).



In college, he recognized how much he liked to learn when he was exposed to hands on experiences that he believed would be helpful for his career. He took everything from welding to design, a combination that proved to be the winning catalyst for the designs in his most successful company, Green Drop Ltd.

John started the interview acknowledging that school and academics just were not for him. Still, later in this interview he explained a detailed and methodical mathematical approach and process that he had refined and was successfully using to run each of the divisions of his companies. This was the child who felt like he had Attention Deficit Disorder because he could not pay attention to what was being taught in the classroom.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

In sharp contrast, Cathy said she found school easy, but still felt frustrated and bored. Like the others, she found things in school that she liked. Where John and Al like sports, she joined Anne in her love for opportunities to be involved in clubs and activities. Like Doug, Cathy recognized the difficulty of being and teaching an entrepreneur in the school system.

Her frustration with school translated in what teachers called an attitude. But Cathy struggled with the feeling that schools try to slow ideas down to the point of frustrating an entrepreneur. Cathy remembered even her peers complaining that she seemed to jump from A to Z and did not need to see the letters between. Her classmates would constantly complain that they would need to “race to catch up”(CB 56.00). She agreed that for a teacher at any level, it would be difficult to know whether a student actually did understand the piece between. It would be hard to measure something for its validity and be assured that it meets the lesson’s objective if the teacher could not see how she figured

it out. Cathy believed that the teacher caused great frustration for her by continually slowing the process of learning down. Cathy always felt like the schools needed to encourage her in her desire to “go fast down the river” (CB 54.00). To her, the energy should have been spent on encouraging her to develop strategies to “stay on that river,” so she could “go even faster” (CB 54.00). “I know I can get from A-Z,” Cathy recalled, “but somebody, at the top, they don't understand because they are not coming at it from the same place. You almost need to have entrepreneurial teachers teaching entrepreneurs, in some respects” (CB 57.00).

Cathy felt like she wished she had gone to college. She felt the school failed her there, as well. She felt that no one inspired her to the “value of post secondary education,” she recalled, “because I think if I had had post-secondary education, it wouldn't matter what widgets I was selling, I would have sold a whole lot of widgets” (CB 49.00). Cathy reconciled her disappointment of not attending college with the knowledge that entrepreneurial thinkers learn what they need to know, as they need it.

### **Summary of perceived value of educational experience**

A few key ideas emerged from participant stories as related to the value they had placed on their educational experience, summarized as follows:

- In most cases the participants were bored (e.g., Al, Luc, Anne, Robert, Gordon, Doug, John & Cathy). There were certainly negative overtones to each story. Cathy recalled being angry because the teachers could not see that she was bored. She felt like teachers needed to be encouraging her innovative and solutions focused thinking, versus punishing her for being different. It was also interesting that each one remembered the negative over the positive school experiences.

- The value of school for these participants was most often related to their belief that they needed the “piece of paper” to get where they wanted to go (AM [2] 1:32.00). They believed that school success was necessary in order to go on to college; yet in many cases, they were unable to meet the mark standard for entrance to college or it was sacrificed for their more favourable opportunities in the work force. Most already had jobs outside of school hours, so school focus became even less important.
- Most felt that they did not learn things of value in the world that they all would soon enter. They disliked the tests for various reasons. Some simply memorized the material in order to get on to the things they really loved. Rick worked extra hard on course assignments in order to exercise the no exam option. Gordon quit school because the teacher was going to make him write an exam. Participants felt that tests did not measure what they knew, nor was it an accurate representation of what they could do.
- In many cases, negative school experiences left these participants feeling like they were not school smart, that they had learning or behaviour issues. There was a feeling that schools too often determine futures based on their perception of a child’s success and potential. This will be looked at more closely in the next section.

### **Perception of feeling intellectual success in school.**

The third theme that emerged from these stories, under sub question #1, and closely related to how they felt about school, was that the majority of participants did not feel that they were “school smart.” From the perspective of the participants, they were

good at problem solving and creating but there was a sense that in most experiences, the school curriculum either did not make sense or they were not interested in what they were learning enough to engage.

***Participant reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Gauthier reflected on his school experience with a sentiment that often rang true with his colleagues. “I don’t think I was a brilliant student,” he recalled (RG: [2] 15.00). “Nothing for me comes easy,” he continued, “I am not a natural, I don’t think, at anything. I have to work hard at everything. Things for me require a great deal of effort, always have” (RG [2] 16.00). His perceived failure to be able to learn is not consistent with the brilliance he ensues when running this major corporation, or starting businesses or dealing with the Prime Minister’s office. What it has done is leave him with a sense that formal learning is a discipline.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Al felt powerless to be able to learn because he could not see the value in it. He now realized that school smart did not necessarily mean that you would be smart in life or in business. Al had a goal and he did not feel like anything he did in school contributed to that goal. Through his life he felt that school did not encourage him to be better, nor did it accommodate his love of problem solving or real life experience. Like the rest of these participants, his school success did not correlate with his life and community accomplishments.

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc believed that he was just no good at school. He referred to himself as not

being “school wise” (LD 39.00). He thought he might have been attention deficit because he just could not focus on what they taught in school. Luc felt that he was “not a scholar” (LD 39.00). His daughter was quick to respond. “But you could have been, and probably would have been, if there had been another way to learn it” (LD 39.00). “If taught differently certain subjects, yeah, maybe then,” he continued (LD 1: 39.00). “I can’t learn accounting from a book,” Luc recalled, “I learn accounting from doing accounting. But that didn’t exist; or maybe it did and I didn’t know it existed. But I didn’t know” (LD 1:32.00). Luc graduated from school with high enough marks to get into Queen’s business school, finished college, built a huge empire, and still felt like he was not good at school.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne had a hard time feeling bright in a system where you would fail the test yet win the science fair. She felt frustrated when she had to open a book and memorize material. She thought she would never have the aptitude to work with numbers until college when she was exposed to a different way of learning. She surprised herself.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

RM worked hard in school, mostly as a respite from his father’s wrath. When he fell behind, he felt that he never had an opportunity to catch up and lived with the sad reality that he would be a “C or D student” (RC 47.00). Both Robert and Gordon, felt frustrated that student’s school achievement would dictate whether or not they could go on to college that would have helped them avoid some of the lessons they had to learn the hard way.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon's childhood feeling of failure carried through school to his young adult life. It was then that the final recognition of his struggle led him to finding help. He remembered the moment that happened: "My thinking changed, everything about me changed," he recalled (GR 7.00). As I listened to Gordon tell the story, and considered all that he has since accomplished and given back in his life, I felt a sense of deep grief that 1. The school system had remained a boring experience for this child, when it could have been so much more, and that, 2. It had failed to recognize and explore the ways in which he could have experienced success. Instead, school contributed to Gordon's sense of feeling like a failure.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

When Minister Horner talked about school, he realized that he did not have "much interest in it" and that he did not find school came to him easily (DH 6.00). On the other hand, in the high demand world he is now in, his wife described himself as someone who is "very observant of other people, [and] very observant of what's going on" (DH 45.00). He has realized that he picks up things and remembers things easily. "I read quickly, I can skim a fair bit of information and I think I disseminate it fairly well," he continued, "and I remember things after the first time," especially things of interest (DH 45.00).

***John Robinson (JR).***

John remembered not being very good, academically, at school. He found it difficult and thought maybe he was "attention deficit" because he was bored and much "more interested in what was going on outside than inside" (JR 52.00). He loved typing

and recognized that it was something he could actively do, and something that he would use the rest of his life. School was still a bad memory for him. He did not think he was smart enough yet not only has he started over 30 companies, but he has also fabricated machinery and innovations, based on his intuitive and creative understanding of need and demand, and has made many of those inventions and companies internationally successful.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy knew she could do as well as she wanted with a short cramming session the night before an exam. It was not until she watched her two sons in the school system, did she began to unpack the reasons for her frustration and boredom. Cathy argued that young entrepreneurs are “drowning because they can’t do what they need to do to conform” (CB 48.00). She remembered in her own school experience how she made teachers feel “dizzy” and “spinney” with all her ideas (CB42.00). Cathy said, “I was always trying to create... so I always felt, kind of this weight of, I’m throwing out too many ideas” (CB 42.00).

Cathy has come to realize that entrepreneurial thinkers look different. They act different and are survivors even in the school system. She explained that

they are probably going to do okay at school, or they’re probably going to be a little self-sufficient; they may not pass, but they’ll figure a way to take care of themselves, because they’re built to continue to come up with those big bad ideas, right? And, for an economy, that’s the Henry Ford’s. You think about everything that’s driven our economy and that’s been entrepreneurial. The car wasn’t created because thousands of engineers decided we needed to improve transportation. You know it was very, very, much about, ‘How can we do this?’ or ‘How do we do that?’— that kind of guerrilla creativity.  
(CB 46.00)

Cathy also recognized how difficult it would be to accommodating so many different ideas in a classroom even if only a half a dozen children were real entrepreneurs. In response, Cathy has worked hard to foster that “culturing, mentoring style,” as she refers to it, when she deals with her own son (CB 1:01.00). He loves the fact that his mom is good at making him think about things differently. Cathy recognized that even though she and her son do not necessarily think exactly the same way, that she is giving him the tools to figure it out himself, at the pace he seems to need to do it.

### **Summary of feeling of intellectual success in school.**

It was a surprise to hear that, in most cases, these extremely successful and innovative people believed or felt that they were not school smart. They loved to learn, but in all but one case, each found classroom studies to be difficult. A number of these participants suggested that they probably had A.D.D. because they could not settle. Their mind was always going and seldom it was in the direction of the class. One said that he may have been smarter if he had had the opportunity to learn differently.

### **Summary of Participants’ Perception of Their own Development: Impact of Education**

Each participant could remember specific things about the impact of teachers on their learning. No one felt physically or mentally threatened; instead, all had normal childhood learning experiences. Each participant had similar types of teachers, and had similar expectations placed on them for learning by their teachers, even though the experiences and stories spanned at least seven decades. The memories usually revolved around their perception of whether or not teachers gave them the opportunity to solve something, or had given them the opportunity to relate their learning to real



life experiences. Mostly these entrepreneurs wanted to be challenged to think versus given material to memorize. In most cases they did what they could to avoid tests, or even if it meant quitting school.

For these entrepreneurs, school was boring. Cathy recalled being angry that teachers could not see how bored she was. In some cases it frustrated them to the place that they did their time, as Al simply described it, or they quit school or college to get on with doing what they really wanted to do. Most had jobs while they attended school. Most admitted that their involvement in extra curricular activities, such as music, sports or clubs, kept them in school. There was frustration because many believed that college would have helped prepare them for the real world issues, yet without high enough school marks they would be unable to attend.

It was sad to see how many of these successful men and women left school feeling like they were not academically smart, yet most had created and were successfully running multi-million dollar companies and foundations. There was a link to what they learned, in that there was no doubt, that if they felt it was valuable to them in the world outside of school, they could learn it easily. Doug said it most poignantly as he recalled his love hate relationship with Math. Concepts that he believed would help him outside of school would be quick and easy to learn. Those that seemed to have no value were very difficult for him. Doug would go on to be the Minister of Finance for Alberta.

### **Participants' Perception of Their Own Development: Needs in Education.**

In this next section I will continue to summarize the interview data that are directly related to research question #1. These findings reflect entrepreneurs' perceptions of their own development, as entrepreneurs, and most specifically in their

school experience. Interestingly, these entrepreneurs knew exactly what they would have needed to be engaged in school. These findings stand in sharp contrast to their personal experience. All of the interviewees felt that school was meaningful when they were able to problem solve and when they were able to relate learning to real life experience.

**Participants' need for problem solving in learning.**

For these entrepreneurs, problem solving appeared to be part of their thinking. Being able to problem solve not only delighted them, but in many cases was the only way they felt they could engage in the learning.

***Participant reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier.***

Richard realized that his favourite class, and favorite instructor, was in college. His appreciation for his instructor was included earlier. For Richard, he recognized the importance of teaching the how more than the what. He felt that it was imperative for schools to adopt a practice of training brains how to be strong and confident; brains that can solve problems because, according to this entrepreneurial thinker, "In the real world you've got to make it up as you go" (RG [3] 11:00). As a decision maker, Gauthier relied "on a good sense of right and wrong" to take risks and solve problems.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Al believed that his main motivator in school would have been problem solving. In hindsight, his teacher, recognized Al's need for problem solving. "The only way I can keep this guy is to give him some enormous problem on Monday and you will hold his interest until Wednesday," Al recalled his teacher saying, "but if you don't, you might as

well send him home because he's got no interest in what were doing" (AM [2] 1: 31.00). Unfortunately, he recognized this after he retired from teaching.

***Luc Duval (LD).***

As Luc unpacked his experiences of school, it became evident to him that what he was missing was the opportunity to solve problems. Like the others, Luc recognized his uncanny ability to problem-solve but did not realize that that was what was missing in his school experience until he saw it in his daughter. He could have been smarter in school, "I liked learning," he said, if he could have learned differently (LD 35.00). A recognizable sadness silenced both father and daughter. Whether they had not recognized, or simply had not verbalized it before, the moment left me with a sense of loss for what could have been a richer educational experience for these two entrepreneurs.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne liked school. Like her father, she loved learning. They agree that they are similar in the way they think and the way they learn. They both felt frustration when they couldn't solve problems. For Anne, even though she liked learning, she was always "trying to find what would make me want to go to school; what would make me get up in the morning and want to go to class, because I want to learn more" (AD 1:17.00). For Anne, she felt like she has found it. At Babson she is able to learn through problem solving real world problems.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert was clear in his recognition that he loved to problem solve. School seemed to be the one area of his life that he could not problem solve his way out of. He told of examples, very early in his life where necessity forced him to solve his way out. But I

sensed sadness in the remembrance of his schooling and the fact that there seemed no room for him to be able to solve the problems that undermined his educational success. Robert focused his attention on sports and on getting out of school.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Like Robert, Gordon felt helpless to feel like there was anything of value for him in school. Gordon always saw beyond the activities of school, to solve the issues around having ownership, being the master of his own destiny, and solving any problems that would get in his way of doing just that. For Gordon, it was hard to imagine what problem-solving activities could look like in the classroom.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

For Doug, the k-12 system was not a conduit for opportunities to problem solve. He had fun at school, but saw the k-12 system as something he had to get through to do what he really wanted to. He did not like Math when it was not related to solving accounting or money related issues. Chemistry clicked with him. One of the High School Chemistry textbooks I looked at was called *Solving Real Problems with Chemistry*, and I looked at a review of it by the Journal of Chemical Education ([dx.doi.org/10.1021/ed200606z](https://doi.org/10.1021/ed200606z)). It was interesting to note that the text was a focused attempt to give direction to students as they developed their problem solving skills through looking at real life examples. It made sense to me why this subject would appeal to this entrepreneur.

***John Robinson (JR).***

John wanted a connection between learning and doing. He loved the sports and social aspect but the academic piece, he said, “it just did not interest me” (JR 51.00). He

can always remember wishing that he were home bringing to reality all that was going on in his head. He wakes up every day with intent to either finish what he began to solve yesterday, or to solve a new problem today.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy loved any class that engaged her in problem solving. For Cathy, she “loved physics because of problem solving- just loved it. Algebra I really liked, geometry, because it was always about solving a problem” (CB 39.00). She did not have to study for math. Cathy talked about needing to study phrases or formulas, but she never had to study problem solving. “I never had to train my brain to solve a problem,” she recalled (CB 39.00).

**Summary of participants’ need for problem solving in learning**

Participants recognized their need for problem solving in their learning experience. My observation was that there was a sense of sadness, either as they recognized that they loved to learn, or as they considered their own child’s educational experience. With these entrepreneurs the opportunity to meld problem solving with learning could have made the difference in how they viewed themselves as learners and their memories of their early learning experiences. In addition to solving problems, there emerged a need to have their learning be of value to them as well.

**Participants’ need for real life experiences in learning.**

Much of what I heard from participants revolved around the need for their learning to have value. It seemed that the real life experience was the piece that either did, or would have cemented their interest to learning. So, for most, school was best when they were able to link what they were learning in class to real life experiences.

***Participant reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Rick recognized how much real life experiences affected his learning as he spoke of his college professor. As was mentioned earlier, this professor introduced him to a style of learning that pushed him to consider how he would solve things in the throws of the real world. Richard remembered his professor saying “Everything I’ve taught you here, when you get out into there into the real world, when you get REALLY get out there, you’ll be lucky if you use 10% or even 15% of what I’ve taught you, because in the real world you’ve got to make it up as you go” (RG [3] 10.00). His professor believed that it was the most important thing that he could do—to train students to think so that they would have the skill to help get through the decisions they would have to make in life.

This stood in sharp contrast to his Elementary and High school years where every bit of his energy went toward homework and studying. In those years, he worked very hard to learn a new language and memorize everything he needed to in order to keep from having to write the final exams.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Like others, Al valued projects that had a real world application. When I asked him to describe the assignment that would have kept him interested and challenged, he knew immediately what would have motivated him in school. “Projects!” he said without even thinking further.

Say in grade 9 I talked to Mr. McDonald; he has the store over here. And he’s going to get you to do all the bookwork, the total sales, and the tax. That’s your project. And you bring it back and present it to Mr. McDonald, and you better do it right because you know him, because he knows your mother and father. I will bet you that I would have worked my little butt off and I would have learned Math like crazy. That would have done it for me.” (AM [3] 26.00)

Al believed that you learn more in the field because it gives meaning to both your learning and your mistakes.

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Like the others, Luc knew that it would have made the difference in his learning if it had involved real life examples. “I was at the wrong school,” Luc recognized, “I can't learn accounting from a book. I learn accounting from doing accounting” (LD 32.00).

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne had the most experience with teachers who taught using real life experiences. She told of a school they looked at in college, where grade school kids start their own businesses and community service was part of their school program. That really appealed to her. Anne talked about the moments when she was able to link what they were doing in class to real world situations. In addition to the examples already given, Anne talked about one assignment where she was part of a team assigned to a company and given the task to “find a solution for them. I’m looking at numbers,” she said, “if we do this will actually help them and how long will it take? I ended up with a 91 in the course because I was seeing where my numbers and where all this calculation was actually going” (AD 34.00).

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

RM remembered the part of school he loved was the hands on, real life learning. When he struggled the most with keeping up with the academics, he found refuge in the things outside of the classroom like sports, clubs and fine arts.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Neither Robert nor Gordon went to school in an age where you questioned how or

what you were taught. Robert immersed himself in activities to ease the boredom and dislike he had for what and how he was taught. The other option was to quit. That was the option that Gordon took when he could not stand the school program anymore. Because he was already working, he took the opportunity to get on with what he knew would be real life learning.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Doug remembered feeling his ah-ha moment in university when he was provided opportunities to learn from people who had been there and could provide real life mentorship. He had an instructor who was a chartered accountant himself so he was able to teach real life accounting and real life examples of what could go wrong. Horner argued, “I think you need to make it attractive for industry to come into the k-12 system because right now they are shunned. If you try and go into a school board and say you want to bring a bunch of business people through the classes- there’s liabilities, teachers... you may have to teach the teacher first” (DH 13:00). For Doug, helping teachers recognize the value of juxtaposing real life experience into school learning would make a difference for someone like himself.

***John Robinson (JR).***

John argued that active learning that revolved around real life experiences would have made school tolerable. He said,

I came through school and didn't know how to balance the cheque-book. I didn't know anything. Typing was good. They tried to teach me French, well, I had trouble learning English. But that was what there was, you know, you had to take two languages. Okay well, I would just like to work on one (JR 52.00).

John believed he was just “no good at school” (JR 53.00). On the other hand, he excelled in college where he could do hands-on, real life learning. It was there that he



learned how to fabricate and create what he could imagine in his head. “But academics,” he said, was “no good for me” (JR 53.00).

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy said she wished that she had been encouraged to solve real life problems instead of made to feel like she was giving the teachers more work. She could memorize easily, so classes that required memory were boring because she could cram the night before and get it right. For example, She got a 100% on her Biology exam in her final year, but settled for a class mark of 88, because, as she said, “what difference did it make if I got 98 or 88... I wanted to be president of the Student Council, and I wanted to be involved in A.Y., so I was happy with the 88” (CB 34.00). Cathy wanted to be involved in real life learning and these clubs helped her do that. Cathy said, “I could have been more successful as an entrepreneur, if my mind had been opened earlier on” (CB 38.00). Classes that allowed real-life problem solving, like Physics and Algebra, were her favorite subjects.

She wished she had gone to college, but corrected herself in that she believed that the practical knowledge she learned on the street would have been more beneficial than more head knowledge. Cathy also reminded me that it would be hard for teachers to teach what they do not understand. A couple participants argued that teachers needed to be entrepreneurial thinkers themselves in order to understand how to teach them.

**Summary of participants’ need for real life experiences in learning.**

Each of the participants felt strongly about what could have allowed them to be a better student and what would have made a difference in their educational experience. These entrepreneurial thinkers are critical thinkers, problem solvers and hungry for a

challenge that made sense and was relevant to their world full of opportunities. In their earlier years, many remember being desperate to solve real-life problems rather than being fed information for the purpose of testing. These entrepreneurs came alive when they felt the exercise had meaning to them, or to the world they were already envisioning in their mind.

### **Summary of Participants' Perception of Their own Development: Needs in Education**

Every participant spoke about the love of problem solving and the need for real life learning. All but one spoke of how problem solving drew them to school and would have been the sweet spot of learning in the classroom. Their stories suggested that they were drawn to classes that involved problem solving and made sense in the real world. They felt bored in subjects that just required memorizing or working from books. They more often succeeded in the hands-on problem solving parts of the course, and most often found exams a waste of their time. Many had strategies for getting around writing exams.

### **Summary of Can Entrepreneurial Thinking Be Taught?**

When I asked participants if they felt that entrepreneurial thinking could be taught, I was surprised with the unity of all their answers. They were firm in the belief that entrepreneurial thinking was not something that they were taught. Further, an even stronger case was made to support their belief that entrepreneurial thinking was not something they learned.

First, there was a strong sense that, for them, entrepreneurial thinking could not be taught. Rick is involved in college programs and was the first to suggest that in his experience, colleges cannot teach you to think entrepreneurially. Rick said, "I think the

academic programs that are out there today that are called entrepreneurship, I think that's a misnomer. I don't think you can teach entrepreneurship. I think you can teach business" (RG [2] 23.00). His argument was based on the belief that he saw entrepreneurial thinkers as risk takers.

How do you teach taking a risk? How do you do that? What are the parameters that you can put down on a piece of paper for someone and say, "Well, if this situation presents itself, you take the chance"? But unless that situation presents itself, I don't think, you can't do that because you don't know what the situation is until it smacks you in the face. And sometimes you have all of 30 seconds to make up your mind. How do you develop a curriculum that is that time sensitive, that can differentiate between a spur of the moment, gut decision? You can't paper that. (RG [2] 23.00)

Rick believed that it is imperative that entrepreneurs learn the fundamentals of business and what to look for. But at the end of the day, if they are not entrepreneurs, you have a group of good business people. This is important for entrepreneurs, but to best serve them, the schools need to visualize the role of instructors in entrepreneurial programs as trainers, strengthening problem solving and confidence by providing as many opportunities to practice using relevant, real world examples where the mistakes are not quite so costly.

Secondly, none of the participants felt like this way of thinking was something they had learned. Luc said many times that he wished he could turn it off! They all told stories of siblings in every generation who were exposed to the same opportunities, the same upbringing and yet were distinctively and identifiably either entrepreneurial thinkers or not. Anne's sister and mother were both good examples of those differences. Her mother also ran a store, like her entrepreneurial husband, Luc. She wanted to be called an entrepreneur because she owned her own business, but according to her husband and daughter, she struggled with risk, with change, and with anything that was

outside of her plan. Anne's sister grew up in the same boarding schools, and in the same home, but she needed the value of constant, as well as the predictability, structure and the security that came with routine. She needed to be given what she needed to learn, opportunity to learn it, and then assessment based on that information. That was everything that Luc and Anne found frustrating about the schools that they attended.

Al recognized that he was different than his thirteen siblings from the time he could remember. There was nothing he could think of that would have nurtured that difference in his thinking because their childhood experiences and upbringing were the same. Gordon and Robert knew from young that they were different. Neither one had entrepreneurial parents nor could they remember any significant experiences through school that would have nurtured their entrepreneurial thinking. Doug could only put a name to his differences as an adult. In his youth, his father encouraged each one of his siblings to try new things.

Cathy did not see where she was nurtured to think entrepreneurially. If anything, she felt punished at home and at school for the way she was. Secondly, she believed that she was born this way because she too, has tried to turn it off and she has not been able to. She recalled, "I didn't understand it, or I felt odd, or I felt that I was alienating people because I was so passionate about my ideas" (CB 47.00). She knew that part of that alienation came with her ability to see a problem coming. When you could see it and others could not, she said, "You stick out like a sore thumb" (CB 47.00). She always felt like a "shit disturber all the time. And it was hard," she continued, "because I kept thinking I'm just crooked, I'm just angry all the time" (CB 48.00). She had to convince herself that the problem was that they could not see it, and not that she was troublemaker,

though that is what she felt growing up. Even within her companies and on the Boards she serves on, she has recognized how differently she thinks. She told of the time that she won Entrepreneur of the Year for Newfoundland Labrador. Her staff welcomed the opportunity to celebrate and was concerned about her appeared nonchalance. Cathy said that she realized that she knew for years that she would win this award. It was just a matter of time. By the time it came, she was already on to the next thing. This was commonly shared occurrence among these entrepreneurial thinkers.

These entrepreneurs did not think that entrepreneurial thinking could be taught, but they did believe that there were things in school that could have encouraged their thinking; that could have better prepared them for the work world; and that could have left them feeling that their skills were of value. Cathy reminded me, that because “you can’t shut it off, it has to come out somehow... there is a huge opportunity to have it come out bigger” (CB 48.00). Cathy has had the opportunity to talk to students in college programs and entrepreneurs all over the world. “When I’ve talked about these women or men that I’ve seen that are entrepreneurial, there’s a path we take, an inspiration goes off and you keep going,” she surmised, “the bigger we can make that path, the bigger we can think and the more impact we can have on society” (CB 49.00). For these entrepreneurial thinkers, recognizing how children learn and not punishing them for their inspiration seemed like all they asked of our education system.

### **How Do Participants Perceive Themselves in the World?**

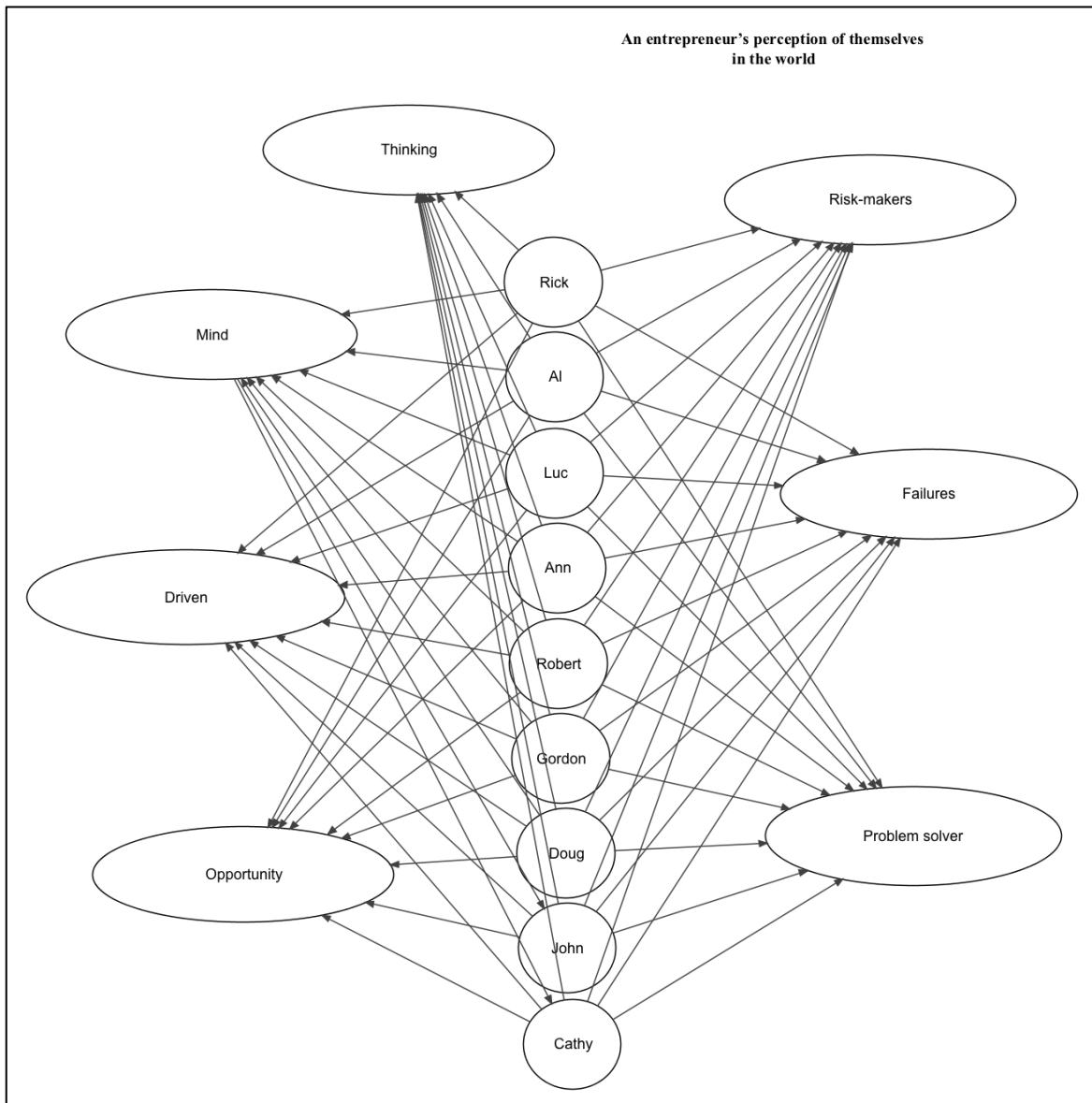
I have always been interested in trying to dig deeper in my understanding of people. I have always valued opportunities to observe and to find ways to gain insight into how people see themselves in relation to others. I have been drawn to behaviour

inventories, such as Meyers Briggs, because in sorting and organizing behaviour. Such instruments can lead to metacognitive processes that inform us about the way we respond and interact to each other. I listened to these entrepreneurs describe their experiences, disclose their frustrations, and attempt to make sense of their own behaviour in relation to those around them. In doing so, it brought to mind interesting connections with how to better understand, encourage, teach and recognize differences in thinkers such as the participants in this study.

Before I began the interviewing process, I attended a dinner with a group of business people and entrepreneurs. I had been thinking about the characteristics of an entrepreneurial thinker and whether they would see themselves as different than other business people. I was also curious to see if their spouse resonated these differences. So, as part of the dinner conversation, I asked the spouses what it was like being married to an entrepreneur. Without exception, each one described their spouse as one who never stopped scheming, planning, organizing, and looking for possibilities. They felt frustrated and often exhausted with their spouses inability to stop looking for possibilities or trying to solve something. It was at this time that one of the entrepreneurs (whom I would eventually interview) interjected. “But you should be in here,” he said, pointing to his head, “you should have to live in here!” It confirmed to me that they did indeed recognize that something different went on in the mind of an entrepreneur. I knew for sure that I needed to ask entrepreneurs how they perceived themselves in the world and see if they recognized how they interacted and influenced that world.

The following section summarizes the participant responses as they reflected on their own behaviour. Themes emerged directly from how they told about their own

personal strengths and struggles and what they believed to be the effect on those around them. Some characteristics seem to play a lesser role in their thinking, but none-the-less appeared to be unique characteristics. The following figure represents how these entrepreneurs seemed to perceive themselves in the world.



**Figure 4.3.** Participants' perceptions of themselves in the world.

The participants told their stories and in each case, it was through the telling that I was able to identify how they perceived themselves. Seven themes emerged, as identified in the figure above. These entrepreneurs believed that they thought differently than others. This was also considered briefly in the above section on learning to be an entrepreneur.

**Participants' perceptions that they thought differently than others.**

These participants recognized that they thought differently than others at some point in their life. Some participants identified this as being part of who they are as an entrepreneurial thinker, while others had not attributed it to anything other than their own drive. All of them felt frustrated with others who could not make decisions. The entrepreneurs I interviewed wanted to make things happen and were not just looking for security. They said they were happiest when they were figuring out ways to get something new going.

***Participant Reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Early in Rick's life, he realized that hard work and willingness to make sacrifices would be what it would take to succeed. He wanted to be at the pulse of decision-making, problem solving, dealing with complex issues, and making things happen. He said that success meant, "working hard and fast my entire life" (RG 7.00). He liked to be the master of his own destiny. That was one of the reasons he started his own business, and one of the reasons he is the president of this Automobile Association. He has authority over his own decisions. He is not afraid of making the tough ones! He looks for decision-making capabilities in other entrepreneurs that he works with. In this organization, there is no time to study the options at great lengths—"paralysis by analysis" he called it (RG



40.00). The issues that Rick deals with require swift and timely decisions; delays will more often eliminate the options, so he looks for entrepreneurial thinkers to sit around this business table.

Rick was valuable for this study, not only for what he brought to the table as and entrepreneurial thinker himself, but he is well known for his skill in bringing together some of the country's top entrepreneurs as part of the association he runs. This is entrepreneurial thinking in itself. He has a proven record of being able to recognize strengths and weaknesses, as well the differences in people that bring with it a clearer understanding of how entrepreneurs think and function. When Rick talked about the entrepreneurial thinkers that he has sought out, he described them as "the top business people in the country by far," he said, "because these guys are like cats. They've got nine lives. They always land on their feet no matter what" (RG 24.00). They are different than business people in that they are "sophisticated, they are polished, they are ruthless, they are street fighters, they are entrepreneurs, they are savvy business people all rolled into one. These guys are a hybrid of everything," explained Gauthier (RG 24.00). He also recognized the need for the rest of the team, the non-entrepreneurs, those around the table who, by way of analogy, hold tightly enough to the rope to keep the kite from flying away, but give it enough slack so the kite can soar.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Al's wife, Mary, described her daughter and him as two who were very different. Al heard her say that they "are never content, they're trying to get the next, grab for the next ring instead of swinging it in the comfort zone. They're always trying to see, if

there's any way” (AM 1:21.00). In many ways she described each one of the entrepreneurial thinkers in this study.

One of Al’s regrets was that he had not “ventured more” (AM [3] 12.00). He admitted that he had to slow down many times because it just put too much strain on his marriage. Al recognized that being an entrepreneurial thinker makes it hard for a spouse. He believed that it would be like having his wife run a restaurant, work terribly hard to get it into a condition where they are finally making a little money, just to have her tell you she bought another and she will start all over again; and then another, and another. It would be natural that you ask if it will ever stop? For Al, as an entrepreneurial thinker, it does not stop.

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc was determined that he wanted to be in business from the time he was young. He thought that business meant working in a large corporation and had not accounted for the parameters that exist that are regulated by other people’s policies and rules, based on their own system of belief. He also realized that there were processes for advancement that failed to encourage hard work over seniority. It was at IBM where he realized how different he was. He felt like he was forever fighting “to break out of the box, out of the mold of you do things this way” (LD 13.00). Luc was described by a colleague as “a thoroughbred in a stable of horses. He just wanted to get out and run and the others were just happy to kind of plod along and pull the cart” (RG [2] 1.00). He was driven by a solutions approach to customer problems. Even with successes, Luc felt held back by stagnant ideas and slow, fearful decision making. “I didn’t know that was entrepreneurial thinking,” he said; “I didn’t know what an entrepreneur was. You know what the word

is ... but you don't know it's inside of you until it's inside of you" (LD 15.00).

At dinner one night, Luc's dad asked him if he was happy. His response was that he was doing well and making good money. "But do you like what you are doing," his dad pried (LD 16.00)? That is where it started. He realized it was not just the money or the accomplishment of a job well done, it was "not fulfilling because your mind's always thinking about doing something and you're not happy doing what you're doing ... especially in the box" (LC1700). Unlike Luc, his wife loved her job there and continued to work there for years to come.

When I asked Luc how he could tell the difference between an entrepreneur and a non-entrepreneur, he responded by saying that it is "by the way they react to situations"(LD1:06.00). To be an entrepreneur, he concluded, "You certainly need to think a certain way" (LD 1:07.00).

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne recognized that she was different from her siblings, though it was not until she was considering what colleges to go to, did someone suggest that her thinking was entrepreneurial. "I always had ideas," Anne said, "weren't always good ideas, but I had ideas" AD 1:31.00).

When Anne first went to Babson, she looked at what her friends were doing in their colleges and questioned her instinct to try something new. She looked at the program and because "It was so different than what I was doing, I felt like what I was doing was wrong," she remembered (AD 1:13.00). By the end of the semester she realized that her program was full of practical and usable learning that fit her unique learning style perfectly; she has never looked back.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert described his own differences through his comparative descriptions of his children. He described his sons all as very bright but considered his first, and third sons a little more conservative in their ideas. They stay the course and can be counted on to get important things done. There is cautiousness in them that RM sees as their strength.

Robert described his second son, as being different than the others, but most like him—runs the high risk and high reward things that the rest would lose sleep over.

RM was different than his own father. He was happy doing the same thing year in and year out. He sold cars every winter and worked in the mines every summer. RM, on the other hand, shook his head as he thought about all the businesses he had started and all the companies he had invested in and sold. Robert described his own differences by describing those around him who were the most unlike, and those who were the most like him.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Like the other entrepreneurial thinkers in this study, Gordon saw his future almost like the strategic moves in a chess game. “So how am I going to get there?” he said, “So I got to work here for so long, in order to get there... and I don’t care how long it takes me but sooner or later I’m going to own it and I am going to work to that end (GR 1:34). His matter-of-fact advice for young people has always been, own the company. He did not care if they want to pick-up garbage. Just own the truck! But ownership is not for everyone. For many, it is hard to leave the security of working for someone else.

“I don’t want the company to retire me at 65, or I don’t want to just be a doctor, I want to own the clinic” Gordon said, with a nonchalance that dictated that this thinking was simply ingrained in who he was (GR 1:35.00).

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Doug looked for opportunities as a teenager, to create something that was not there before. Later he remembered feeling like a businessman, started some companies and continued to look for opportunities. For him, “being able to that find opportunity, analyze the risk, [and] verify whether the reward was worth the risk” was something he loved, though it never occurred to him that he was an entrepreneur (DH 2.00). It was not until he had decided to get in to politics, and was asked to describe himself, that he considered the possibility. As a minister, his innovative and out of the box thinking secured him firmly as an entrepreneurial thinker. It was in that capacity that he was drawn to my attention as being a different kind of politician.

Doug’s differences were evidenced in his ability to bring forward unique educational initiatives like Campus Alberta and manage disasters like the devastation to Alberta farmers from the closed borders after the detection of Mad Cow disease.

***John Robinson (JR).***

John recognized that there was a difference in the way he thought than others, especially his siblings. He has watched his brothers. They do not have the same “aggressive desire to try different things” and they “don’t seem to be motivated to start something” (JR 1.00). On the other hand, John likes to “initiate something on a daily basis,” he said (JR 1.00).

Like them, he struggled through bad investments. It made them reluctant to risk again. He did not know why, but through those times; he felt that he just had “no desire to quit on it. I’m just motivated to try to make it successful” (JR 3.00). John recognized that there are those who do not think the same, and he can only explain it by saying that “they’re just different” (JR 37.00).

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy always felt that she came across as different. She recalled “I didn’t understand it, or I felt odd, or I felt that I was alienating people” (CB 48.00). It was not something she could turn off—and she tried. Cathy saw herself as a little less risk adverse than others, but was surprised when people would identify and point specifically to her differences:

Somebody said to me once, that you could see things, Cathy, before we could see it, you could see it. I used to think that that was odd, that people would say, you know, why, do you see things. And I would say, doesn’t everybody see it? And it actually took me a long time to realize, no, they don’t, and I really thought that it was just other people not accepting that they had the same talent. And I’d think, we all see it but it doesn’t happen that way. (CB 4.00)

For Cathy, she admitted that this was one of her biggest struggles:

And part of it is that I was impatient waiting for other people to make the decisions. And the solution seems so obvious to me and why didn’t it seem obvious to you? And that’s been probably my biggest struggle. And I’ve had to learn, and I didn’t understand it in my 20s and 30s, I really thought that it was people were choosing not to think of solutions as fast. And it’s taken me a long time to realize that. It created some negativity around me because people you know I’d jump in really fast, people would be like gosh she’s awfully arrogant or she’s awfully bossy and I used to really feel bad about that and I’m jumping in because I know the answer, don’t you know the answer? And then I had to realize no, hang on, they don’t know the answer, and I have to slow down a bit. And it’s really difficult for me to slow down, ... even now it’s really hard for me to slow down. (CB14:00-15:00)

Cathy recognized the same difficulty as she has served on boards. She agreed that her ability to see solutions as both a gift and a curse. After many years of trying to

understand herself better, Cathy discovered that it is okay if she sees “the trains coming and have nobody else to see them” (CB 1:14.00). It did not make her “abnormal,” but revealed a different kind of normal for her. She recalled:

I remember going into work thinking that I was narcissistic, that I was evil, that I was Machiavellian, that I was toxic, that I was out to screw everybody, it was a really, really, really dark spot in my life and it wasn't until I started to peel back the layers and realize no, no, no, it's okay and just being me. I'm not doing what I'm doing to alienate 1400 of my fellow operators. It's just me. So with acceptance of it and realizing that I was not been able to shut it off, just made my life a whole lot easier. But I do think we struggle sometimes with thinking about how people see us. Right? And that was tough for me. That was really, really, hard, especially if I thought they were thinking of me negatively? Which they can, right? (CB 1: 14.00)

Cathy came to realize that the persona of entrepreneurial thinking was expressed in her by a natural tendency to identify problems, to predetermine how the train will hit and get her off her agenda, and how she will fix it. The story I heard from Cathy was the result of many years of trying to understand herself, her differences and passions, and trying to reconcile it all in an unsuspecting body.

### **Summary of participants' perceptions that they thought differently.**

The group painted a tapestry of what it was like to think differently. The participants told stories of differences and the realization that everyone did not automatically think the way they did. For some it was that others would not have that passion for trying things. For others, it was in the realization that people could not see the same solutions, or would kept trying even after things went poorly. The difficult piece seemed to be that they would have very few people in their circle that would think the same way. There were struggles and questions along the journey to understanding their difference. For each one, the journey was marked differently, but it was clear that most were still on it.

### **Participants' perceptions that their mind never stops.**

For each of these participants, this piece seemed to raise an element of helpless regret. There was a sense of the pain this has often caused themselves and others, but a sense that there was nothing they could do about it. It was so much a part of them; it was like an extra arm that, while it proved valuable in getting things done more efficiently it often got in the way.

#### ***Participant Reflections.***

##### ***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Richard talked about imbalance in the mind of an entrepreneurial thinker and made a comparison to the way a prodigy or a genius thinks. He said that geniuses have such mental focus on one piece of their life; it may be piano, math or science that they often end up with “imperfections and imbalances in other parts” (RG 27.00). “They are overcome with compensating on this one area of their life to the point where the brain is just focused on one thing and basically is oblivious to what else is going on,” Rick continued (RG 27.00). He argued that the entrepreneurial thinker is the same in that they spend so much time “taking the chance, seizing the opportunity...that somewhere at the end of the day, are mere mortals. They are subjected to seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day and they can't find an eighth day or a twenty-fifth hour or they'd have it full in order to be able to make up for something else” (RG 27.00). Rick realized this early in his career. His fiancé left her ring on the table when he refused to give up opportunity for her. He knew the marriage would have been short lived, had she not called it off. He admitted, “I spent my career trying to be successful... I know there's a price for that. Where I got lucky is that I married the girl that I did. She said ‘okay, I love you and I'll



support you, I'll be there for you', 36 years later and she still is" (RG 28.00). This was not unique to Rick, each participant recognized that this inability to stop, places insurmountable pressure on his or her relationships.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Al was all too familiar with his inability to stop his mind from analyzing and problem solving. "It works constantly. It never stops, it never stops!" he said (AM [2] 1:27.00). Al walked every morning with his wife, Mary. This was supposed to be their quiet time together, but he admitted that he just could not shut it off. This is an example of his last walk:

You know when I am walking in the morning, I see something going by, a car will go by and I am saying you know, I could do this new business, people are refurbishing cars, they're doing them up. Why don't I just get a big garage truck and get all the stuff and start doing, and these guys that are making the big hits are happy to pay the big money... planning to dig into that hill up there and park my trucks on top, so I'm in to that process and I am just finishing up a deal with Pat Forbes next-door that was a Saturn/Saab store and that's a two million dollar deal... He has a little bit of 100 that will go with my seventeen hundred so all told it will be a three million dollar deal... (AM 1:22.00)

"That will be in my mind all the time, every time," said Al (AM [2] 1:28.00). I asked Al, if someone were to say, here is a problem, what happens in his head? He replied that it just clicks into his already spinning wheels. For instance a guy called him with a line on 25 trucks. Immediately he thought about the garbage issues in Dartmouth and how they could be turned into a waste management company. And then he said, "Mary would say 'what in the hell are you doing in the garbage business'!" (AM 1:29.00). His inability to stop problem solving has got him into many different industries but he also recognized how much of a strain it puts on his relationships.

It is hard to go away for holidays, and when he does, it still does not stop and he is anxious to get back. He is retired and yet he is the first at the office each morning. Al recognized the importance of a spouse who is patient enough to “put up with” the way his mind works even though Al recognized how much of a strain he has put on his marriage.

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc asked me, if I had found a high level of ADD (Attention Deficit Order) in the interviewees I had interviewed? Luc’s daughter responded, “You have a very high level of ADD!” (LD 1:53.10). His mind just does not stop.

In Luc’s IBM job, he realized that the job he thought he wanted, did not allow him to consider the ideas that were always in his head. “You know it's not just the money, it's not just the accomplishment of doing the job well, it's just not fulfilling because, your mind’s always thinking about doing something and you're not happy doing what you're doing,” he recalled (LD 17.00).

Luc’s way of slowing his mind has been to get involved in sports. He skis, golfs and plays hockey as a way of tricking his mind into thinking of something else. For the most part, he claimed it worked, at least until something spurs him to lose concentration in the game. It is then the floodgates open, his mind starts its over activity and he ends up playing terribly. “So, to enjoy skiing and to enjoy playing golf I need to fully concentrate on the golf,” explained Luc, “and not think about the 50 other things that are going on inside my head. So that’s my off button, and if I didn’t have that, I don't know, I'd have to take up fishing or something” (LD 1:55.00). I realized that I have sought out a different type of entrepreneur, and it is this addictive entrepreneurial thinking that seems to

pervade every aspect of their life. “It’s like a drug or a curse,” concluded Luc (LD 1:58.55). It is difficult to convince those around him, especially a spouse, that they need not worry about the schemes that only he can visualize, especially when other people need structure, absolutes and the safety that comes with process.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne recognized that she too is constantly thinking. She called referred to this constant flood of possibilities as things that go through your head when you are “sitting in your car in traffic and thinking of new ways of managing traffic. It really can be from anything. You can look at anything and find a way to make it better. There are so many opportunities,” she decided (AD 1:19.00). These are “new ideas,” Anne explained, “that help you and facilitate doing things, so it can be anything, really, anything that would somewhat make life easier” (AD 1:03.00).

Anne saw this same thing in other students at Babson. She was delighted with the conversations that go on campus. Students are talking about what is going on in their thinking: how they want to respond to this idea, and how passionate they are about those new ideas. “They don’t choose a job,” she explained, “they created a job to fit what they are passionate about” (AD 6.00). She told of a friend who carries a note pad with her all the time. “I feel like I have so many ideas,” she recalled, “and then I forget them, so I have to write them down or they’re gone (AD 1:53.03). Anne soon felt camaraderie with those whose minds never stopped.

She also recognized how hard this has been on family members who do not see things the same way. She recognized that her mom will lose sleep over it, her crazy list of

ideas, and she'd say, "Mom it will be okay" (AD 1:32.00). Entrepreneurial thinking is hard on those who do not see what is going on inside of her head.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert walked and wrote as a way of getting his mind away from solving problems and creating new ideas. "Years and years I walked every morning," he recalled (RC 43.00). He admitted that he still solved problems while he walked, but it built on his commitment to good health. His inability to quit thinking drove him to begin writing down his thoughts. From that exercise emerged what he called the Precepts and will become a big part of the legacy of thought that he has now left behind. (See appendix G)

Robert recalled how difficult his constant entrepreneurial thinking was on his children, and on his wife, Shirley. He attributed some of their reservations to risk to the idea that he had done it enough for all of them. "I could have been a more attentive father," he admitted, "I could have been a more caring husband, but the kids turned out okay, and I really lived with a lady that had a lot of patience" (RC 1:06.00). He, too, recognized that this nonstop, entrepreneurial thinking put a profound strain on relationships.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

I have talked to a few people who know Gordon well, and who describe him, first, as someone who is always thinking. When I asked him when his mind ever stopped thinking and scheming, he actually had not thought about it, but recognized that in himself (GR 1:41.00). I asked him if there was a time when his mind was not going. He responded that there was not. Every morning, before he got out of bed, he "would smoke three cigarettes, drink a cup of coffee, hit the deck and be ready to go, day planned" (GR

1:42.00). He had never thought about why he did it, or that anyone else did not, it was just natural for him. He walked his dog and gambled to get a reprieve, but found it just gave him something else to think about.

Gordon recognized the strain he put on his wife, and like Robert, honored her by saying that he was grateful she never questioned what he did with their money, which was partly hers. “It was unbelievable how much she believed in me,” Gordon realized, because he recognized that many times “there was reason to doubt” (GR 1:11.00). Thinking entrepreneurially certainly affects those around you.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

When I asked Doug how he rests his mind, he responded by saying that “Exhaustion” causes it to rest (DH 33.00), though he is not sure he would know if it had rested. He also added, “I enjoy reading a good book” (DH33:00), and he does “strategy games on the computer” (DH34:00). Like others, Doug added that it is only if he was able to focus on something else fully, is he able to distract his mind.

When I asked Doug what it has been like for his wife, he replied, “She deserves a medal! I have put her through a lot in the last 33 years” (DH 36.00). Doug, like his dad, is positive, able to get over things quickly and move on. “This is something my wife,” Doug explained, “has great deal of difficulty with” (DH 40.00). With his children, he is “constantly fighting the battle to make sure that my kids look at things in a positive [way], it doesn’t matter what it is,” said Doug (DH 41.00). While thinking entrepreneurially can be an automatic response for some, it can directly affect those who cannot picture the same end.

***John Robinson (JR).***

John believed that he had ADD. He could never stop his mind from seeking out new possibilities. He remembered sitting in school thinking about possibilities at the farm. At the farm, he would be scouting out possibilities for improving something. When I asked John if he is ever able to shut it down, he responded by saying that the only way it happens is to find new things that require his full attention. “You have got to concentrate on something else,” he said (JR 58.00). John pilots an airplane because every flight is a new and unique adventure. He likes to shoot, hunt and fish, but admits that he does not do as much of it as he should. He plays Blackjack and has been a student of the strategy for 50 years, “read books and took courses” as a way to get his mind off of the business and problem solving (JR1:00.00).

“Holidays are tough for me,” he recognized, “it’s tough to be able to relax” (JR 54.00). So he takes lots of short holidays because he needs to get away with his wife. But he cannot stop thinking and planning very long. “I think that is difficult for a spouse, I really do,” admitted John (JR 59.00). He recalled telling her just the night before that he feared that he was not attentive enough to her. His mind was rapidly creating solutions for protecting the ranch from the next flood and that was what energizes him. John would be the first to say how hard it is to be the partner of an entrepreneurial thinker.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy talked about how fast she gets bored when she thought about the fact that her mind was not being able to stop. When Cathy entered the joint venture with McDonalds, many of the stores were in need of repair. She set out to tear down some, and repair others. When this was done, she was bored. She then set out to buy out the

partnership, which she did in record time, and then was “bored again” (CB12:00). “My to-do list is never ending, it just never goes away,” she recalled (CB21:00).

Cathy argued that being an entrepreneur is “not a job it’s a lifestyle. You know you can’t turn it off, it’s 24/7”(CB32:00). For her, taking breaks is the best she can do to let her mind rest. “You learn to manage that time,” Cathy suggested, “but when it comes to solution and finding problems, I can’t shut it off.” (CA1:08:00). She explains:

Well, it's like, we go on holidays and he [her husband] can shut off altogether, right? And I will be on the beach watching people walk by, and watching the little parasailing business next to us, struggling to serve three people and wonder why there's no, like I am, analyzing it, and the only way for me is that I have to shut my eyes. Right?

For her, being an entrepreneur is a never-ending flow of ideas, “creative solutions, lots of ideas, can’t stop with the ideas,” she said. “And there’s always two or three things that you want to do... you’re never kind of fully finished” (CB 19:00). She has watched other successful entrepreneurs and recognized that they too are constantly thinking about possibilities. She spoke of one who was “really full of ideas, and not just ideas about his own business, but about ideas for my business” (CB 20:00).

Cathy recalled that when she struggled the most, it was thinking she could do everything. “My to do list is never ending, it just never goes away...it was just this massive list of things to do, that I had to get done, I could never get on top of it” (CB 21:00). When Cathy learned to “stay up in the trees” as she referred to it, she was able to do what she did best (see possibilities and seek solutions) and let others do their job (CB22:00).

### **Summary of participants’ perceptions that their minds never stop.**

These entrepreneurs knew that one of their greatest strengths was also one of their

greatest difficulties. It was the well-spring of ideas and limitless possibilities. It propels ideas through the system like bullets. It never stops; it never goes away. It controls holidays and relationships and forces the dweller to find ways to trick it into short-lived submission. Some have called it A.D.D., while others have awed at the brilliance. Many times, the entrepreneurial thinker will respond negatively to its dominance, while other times simply accept its solutions. The mind of an entrepreneur can be their friend or foe, but one thing they know, it never stops.

**Participants' perceptions that they are driven to think bigger.**

Cathy believed that one could trace paths, and moments of impact, where a light bulb goes off for an entrepreneur; ideas merge with opportunities and vision for something new emerges. A link to the inability to rest their mind, these entrepreneurs seemed to have the drive to think bigger and to do more. Each entrepreneur had a common understanding of where they wanted to be that centered on an insatiable drive to think bigger. This unquenchable drive to respond to do more, be more, and create more is evidenced in each entrepreneur.

***Participant Reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Rick has always known that he was driven to succeed. He was keen, eager and willing. He was a listener. He said, "if someone sat me down... I was willing to take that advice... I had mentors, people who believed in me, saw something...so I've been working hard and fast my entire life" (RG 6.00). He was confident in what he knew, and had done that he felt that he had "a good sense of what is right and wrong, what the right decision might be," he remarked (RG13.00). .



There is a feeling, “there is an element of rush,” he said, “there is an adrenaline rush there, you know like, drugs to an addict... it's the fix that you get that day, that moment, at that particular time, with regards to that particular project” (RG 16.00). In his mind, it is the addiction that is the driving force keeping entrepreneurial thinkers coming back. They are comfortable in their own ability to solve problems so they can make decisions and recover quickly if they need to be adjusted.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

After his first semester of college, Al headed out on his own to do what had to be done to have power over his own life. Unlike his siblings Al took the road less traveled and sought out new ways to do something “important in this life” (AM [2] 1.00). He was driven to “ownership” (AM [2] 1.00). “So, giving up whatever it takes,” he recalled, “I had to get money to prime the pump to get ownership so I will significant in my mind. I will have achieved what I wanted to and that’s what really drove me” (AM [2] 2.00). Al was driven to be someone, to prove himself and to be successful in his own right. Both he and his wife, Mary, worked bell-to-bell to save enough money to be able to take advantage of an opportunity when it would come. “I am in charge of making me important in this life,” said Al, “you may not say that it worked but that’s what – to make me significant, you know” (AM [2] 1.00). So Al gave up hockey, golf and whatever it took to make it happen. “I will have achieved what I wanted to do. And that's really drove me, even on a Saturday morning rather than going to do anything, go back to work, or evenings after dinner, when you saw the news, read a book, or anything, no, no, I'm going back to work.” Al remembered (AM [2] 2.00). For Al, it was not to buy a bigger home or to get into a high-ranking club. It was for the “can do” as he describes it, that “is all the

matters” (AM2-5.00). It is all to make available the opportunity. Whether it is to help someone or to invest, Al is driven to be ready.

Being financially ready does not mean you have a drive, according to Al. “The difference is,” said Al, “when I look at some famous hockey player who wants to become an auto dealer, I don’t know how much drive he has to run a business even though he has the money to put it to work there” (AM 1:09.00). Just because one has the money, according to Al, it does not mean they will be successful in business.

For Al’s daughter, her driver is to be “the best pediatrician in Canada.” admitted Al (AM [1] 27.00). There is no stopping her, he sighs. She is driven.

She wouldn’t take 92 if she could get 96... went to the university, got into med school. She became a pediatrician, got transferred to sick kids in Toronto where she did her residency in pediatrics. She didn’t stop at that. She took a fellowship... Mary says ‘what is she into now? She just never stops’... she is this very driven person... now she’s the chief of pediatric emergency at IWK hospital...there’s no stopping her- it’s just her way. (AM [2] 46.00)

Al has heard his wife say that neither, he or his daughter, are ever content. For Al, he has worked extremely hard all his life so he has the means to respond to opportunity.

***Luc Duval (LD).***

According to Luc, everything he has done in life, from his desire to get through school to opening his first and every other business after, was directly correlated to the depth of his drive. He disliked school, but finished because he believed that he needed to go to college in order to get in to business. When he got into his first business, at 26 years old, he managed to open all of his dealerships without using any of his own money. His drive was so insatiable that he virtually made what should have been impossible, possible.

I mean, trust that when you think you can make it happen and you don't give up; and you don't give up because you don’t have the cash—find the cash, and then you

get another hurdle and then you keep going. You have to trust the movement and persevere. I think that's what we do. (LD 1:43.00)

Like Rick, Luc referred to that drive as being “like a drug” (LD 1:58.00). For Luc, it does not stop.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne’s drive emerged in different ways throughout her life. Her innovative ways of finding success in boarding school situations exemplified how determined she was to remove obstacles that may affect her success. Anne did not like her school but had a desire to “want to make it work” so “I followed the rules but did things differently” (AD 1: 48.00). As a child she started a business selling the family’s bottled drinks. When her father explained profit and loss to her, it did not discourage her. Instead, she set out to sell those bottles at a profit, even in spite of complaints by those who had purchased her goods the day before at a cheaper price.

In College, Anne’s group had to start their own company and apply for positions in that company. “I wanted a manager position,” said Anne, “so I applied for five, and presented for five, and found a way to get elected for one of them.” (AD 1:08.00). In order to qualify for these positions, she learned how to build a website and do on-line sales. “Did I know how to do that before? No, but I learned for it,” she recalled (AD 1:08.00).

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert recognized that he was driven to succeed and preceded most of those ideas with “I had a plan” (e.g., RC 16.00 & RC 18.00). Robert had a plan to be successful from the time he was young. He found a way to pay for his bike gift from his father, as a child, a clear example of how driven he was even at an early age. He devised a “goofy plan” as

he would later call it, to “invest in 10 small companies, improve the equity position by 10 thousand dollars a year, and in 10 years I'd have a million dollars,” he recalled (RC 16:00). Robert would always have a plan that steered his drive as he got into something, or out of it.

Each year, Robert was motivated to invest and situate his businesses in such a way that his family, and the families of those who worked for him, would be taken care of. That did not necessarily mean simply financially, though that would be substantial. He was driven to deep contemplation and concern for how his own legacy in this empire would impact his children and his grandchildren. When RM stepped down from active leadership of his companies, he was still driven to give back resources and time. He engaged in opportunities to speak to generational planning groups and schools and left a legacy for the next generation through his thought-filled precepts for living and daily involvement in nurturing the people in their businesses, community and family.

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon recognized his natural drive toward doing better and more. He made a plan of action each day, and strategically filled in the blanks of what he needed to know in order to fulfill his goals.

Gordon was always driven to do better. Early in his career, he looked for the person who was doing the best in the car business. He said “I told him I would buy him the best steak in town if he would tell me what I was doing wrong in my dealership” (GR22.00). Gordon remembered, “I set out to prove to myself that I could really run a dealership and really make things happen, and that I could have good people and they

could go on to become better dealers” (GR29.00). In the horse business, he studied to put together breeds and lines and ended up with two horses honored in the Hall of Fame.

Like RM, both Al, and Gordon found that drive does not retire. Al still found himself at work every morning and recognized that he now has the resources to respond more opportunities. Gordon’s resources also allowed him to respond to opportunities. He has always made himself available to build into the lives around him. For Gordon, getting old has changed some of the things he can do, “but it’s been fun!” he said with a smile. “Some of the things that have happened to me, I can’t tell you where they came from. I know that it wasn’t just luck” (GR 1:37.00). Try “to be the best at what you do,” he told me (GR 1:43.00). For Gordon, I will mostly remember this statement as I have heard him say it in one way or another in many different ways; one that reflects the profundity of thinking and the depth of his drive even at 85 years old.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to sit down and say, hey, I want to be a geologist, if the end goal is to own an oil company. So how am I going to get there? So I got to work here for so long, in order to get there, but my aim is never to be just a geologist. My aim is to own an oil company. And I don't care how long it takes me but sooner or later I'm going to own it. And I am going to work toward that end. I am not going to be happy with just being a geologist. I don't want the company to retire me at 65. Or, I don't want to just be a doctor; I want to own a clinic. What ever I do, I want to be the master of my own destiny. (GR 1:35.00)

Gordon’s interests, involvement in businesses and mentoring, even at his age, evidenced a drive that is far from ordinary.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Many would question Doug’s decision to leave the security of his bank manager position and pursue risk-filled new business ventures and then enter politics. Doug’s drive was evidenced in the risks he took and his consistent willingness to pursue the unknown. Doug recalled running “vessels of commodities up and down the coast of

Mexico...was a conscious business decision that we made that we would go into countries that no one else would go,” said Doug (DH 35:00). For Doug, this drive was defined as “self-determination to plan my own future” (DH 1:00). “You could be an entrepreneur within a corporate setting, you can be an entrepreneur on your own, [and] you can be an entrepreneur in politics,” Doug said, “I don’t think it is just business; I think it is a mind-set more than it is anything else” (DH 1.00).

***John Robinson (JR).***

John lived by the belief that each day he will either be creating something new or making a new idea actually happen. He was driven to create and started his first business while he was still in High School. Almost forty ventures later, he still wakes up thinking of new ideas. His inability to rest his mind or to holiday for more than a couple of days at a time is consistent with the drive that distinguished the other participants in this study. At the present time, he has eighteen successful operations. John reminded me “there is not one out there that is not planned” (JR 45.39).

Like Gordon and Al, John worried that he would not have enough time to complete all that he wanted to do. John recognized that his drive to create and solve problems would not retire.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

What I noticed from Cathy’s story is that boredom was most often the precursor to seeing her drive in action. After she went into partnership with McDonalds, and undertook an aggressive capital plan to update and renovate all her stores, she was bored. So she made a plan to buy corporate office out. Twelve months later she was bored again. So she decided to create Bennett Group of Companies from which each set of companies

would silo. Over the next three years she wrote a strategic plan and hired a team (Chief operations officer, HR, and Finance director) and aggressively looked for investment opportunities.

She invested in businesses such as a spa, a recruitment company, an industrial fabrication company and real estate. One space they bought would have been okay to renovate and rent as commercial space, but she said, “I wanted to test our team to see if we could do a bit more with it” (C 13.00). She created a concept called the business suites for executive and consultant rentals and has since opened 3 more buildings. Her boredom then drove her to serve on corporate and international boards and then into politics.

Cathy talked about when she was named one of the top 50 CEOs, and then the first female top CEO in Atlantic, Canada. Her staff was frustrated because they wanted to go out and celebrate and she simply felt like, “That’s over,” she recalled (CB 37.00).

And it’s hard for my team, because they need that moment, and that celebration, and it's hard on family as they need it as well. But I am like, I get no joy out of the celebration, because I'm already passed it. Partly because I already know that it's going to happen. I know it could happen, I knew, I knew it was only a matter of time before I was going to be the top 50 CEO. I didn’t know if I was going to be the first girl, but I knew I was going to get it. I know what my work is like compared to everybody else. And it’s not arrogant. It just is, right? (CB 37.00)

For this entrepreneurial thinker, by the time those around her could see her thinking emerge into reality, she was already on to the next thing.

### **Summary of participants’ perceptions that they are driven to think bigger.**

According to Cathy, solving a problem is triggered by inspiration and fueled by opportunity. That could be one reason why entrepreneurs are driven to think bigger, to do more, and to make the unlikely work. They may appear to be lucky and they may appear to make reckless decisions, but according to these entrepreneurs, their life is like ta chess

piece. The more you can predict possible moves, the quicker and the more confident your own moves will be. Thinking beyond this play is a skill and a gift that these entrepreneurs possess. They also know that if they make the wrong move, and it costs them the game, that they have the drive to look at what went wrong and try again.

**Participants' perceptions that they cannot stop seeing opportunity.**

Like Cathy, some entrepreneurs described times when they were bored and were driven by a conscious effort to seek out opportunities. Other times, it was as simple as recognizing opportunity and not being afraid to act.

***Participant Reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Richard told stories of sacrifices that he and his family made to follow opportunity. His father brought his young family from Quebec to go to school, to live and work in a totally English-speaking province all for the sake of opportunity. Rick chose opportunity over a fiancé, when the girl he was to marry refused to leave the comfort of where she was raised. "You've got to say yes whenever you got an opportunity," said Richard, "You've got to be able to make the sacrifices to succeed" (RG5:00). "To be an entrepreneur," he argued, "it is about taking a chance, it is about taking a flyer, it is about doing something, seizing an opportunity that others, more conservative than you, might say Jesus Murphy, you know, I'll pass on that" (RG16:00). For Rick, it is a gut instinct, those rushes of adrenaline that separate the entrepreneurial thinker from another person. It is being a lone ranger. "It is having the ability to seize the opportunity...willing to take that chance where others aren't going to succeed" (RG 19:00).



He also argued that entrepreneurial thinkers are able to respond to opportunities because they are not constrained by rules and policies of a big corporation. If there are rules, policies and parameters, it is because they made them.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Al's passion for what he does is in his ability to respond to opportunity. He recognized the need for ownership "if they [an entrepreneur] went back to cutting lumber, they would say, now I'm going to buy a sawmill" (AM [2] 25.00). He consciously put himself in a situation where he was able to respond to that opportunity. His first investment came with the purchase of the dealership that he worked at. Since then, Al and Mary have had the opportunity to invest in many companies, as well as support numerous community organizations and charities.

Al recognized that many people misunderstand entrepreneurs. Early in our interview, I asked Al what motivates him and drives him on. His response took me back for a moment. "Power," he said,

... to get more, not so much for greed; not to buy bigger motor home, or another motorhome, or any motorhome, or a boat, or get into the high-ranking golf club, no. No consequence. The only consequence is, today somebody can call and say, 'Al, there is this fabulous opportunity. It's going to take \$5 million cash. We called you.' Thank you very much; I'm totally on it. And I would look at it, and if it was the right, I can do it. That 'can do' is all that matters. I don't have a Rolls Royce out here, or whatever and I don't have a Mercedes here, I don't have a boat or a dock here, 'Cause that's not it. I don't have a cottage. That's not it. It's not getting things for personal gratification at all. Not what I'm interested in. It's having the power to get what, to take me to what, to probably, out do another businessman. That would be the thrill. (AM [2] 4.00)

Knowing his community can count on him when they need him, delights both Al and his wife, Mary. Being able to respond to opportunity, whether it is helping someone get into a business deal, a child who needs surgery, or a family who is in

need, they want to respond and not have to say – if I had the means I would help you. Consequently, he and his wife are driving forces in the Halifax/Dartmouth area and well beyond. Whatever the motivation, Al could recognize opportunity and something within keeps him “always looking for more” (AM [2] 1:07.00).

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc told of his grandfather’s ability to recognize and act on opportunity. In the 20s and 30s, he began by buying a car and then selling it. He soon recognized a need and sought out the head of General Motors to give him a franchise. He would continue pushing opportunity and eventually become “the first multiple site dealer in Canada” (LD 19.00).

Luc felt that had that same drive, as much as it was a blessing or a curse. When he was twenty-four, he recognize an opportunity to open a Toyota point in Boucherville. In response, he sought out property, created a business plan, and then presented it to Toyota Canada. He had no car experience other than working summers in grade school, for his dad. It was only because he was so young that they asked that he bring his father on as partner. He borrowed money from his father and bought the land, built the store and hired the team from scratch. He wanted to buy out the shares early, but there seemed to be no hurry on his father’s part. So, on his own, he approached Mazda and ended up getting a deal on his own. With the letter in hand, he convinced his dad to begin selling him shares in the first company and set out to build his second store. For each of his stores, including everyone one that he has opened since, he has “refinanced, regenerated, and re-leveraged” and figured out a way to never have to put a cent of his own money into them (LD 31.00).

He borrowed a million dollars from his dad, “paid back the million and borrowed it again, paid it back and borrowed it again. Kept going back and forth” (LD 31.00).

Luc saw challenges as problem solving opportunities. He figured out how to buy his first dealership and in doing so, secured a second franchise on his own as a back up. He then believed that he could provide all the various services for his customers in one center. Though logistically it did not work, he continued seeking opportunities that did work and now runs many successful franchises. Luc described his brother as a car nut who went on to buy the family store from his dad. Within 10 years “He was going bankrupt, his marriage was on the rocks,” Luc recalled, “his wife was going, so he called me up and said here are the keys, I’m gone... and today he’s much happier than twenty years ago” (LD 44.00). Luc attributed so much of his brother’s difficulties in the car business as inability to see and act on opportunity.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

As Anne looked at sources of opportunity for the entrepreneur, she felt they came from everywhere. She felt that opportunities “can be... from anything. You can look at anything and find a way to make it better. There's so many opportunities,” she said (AD 1:19.00). Anne remembered stepping out in response to what she saw as opportunities since she was a child. She talked of selling the family water bottles at the park, when she was very young, without her parents knowing. She also remembered both the good and bad of a trip to Germany she planned and executed as a young girl only asking her parents for permission after everything was planned and booked. She realized that even through this experience, she could see possibilities and opportunities to solve problems and make what seemed like a disappointing situation turn into a wonderful experience.

Anne chose Babson over any of the eleven colleges she was accepted to. She had intended to go to Queens because it was where her father went. Instead, she responded to an instinct, the glimpse of an opportunity to go where she knew little of the entrepreneurial focused program and has not regretted it.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Soon after grade 12, Robert got a job at a brokerage firm and got a taste for the stock market (RC11.00). He liked the stimulation and he worked hard. He had an instinct and a desire to recognize opportunity. Robert spoke about his love for the stock market and how his success in buying stock became the conduit for opportunity. “Along the way, accountants and lawyers, or somehow people would bring to my attention the business that was, seemed to be successful and was for sale” said RM, “and did we have an interest” (RC 29.00).

Robert also spoke specifically to a theme that came up in the other participant stories, the realization that there are other factors at play that the entrepreneur has not control of. Responding to opportunities, and believing in them enough to risk personally has much to with the coming together of the perfect storm. How these entrepreneurs dealt with these failures will be looked at below.

There were many reasons why Robert responded to different opportunities, but with each, he believed that he had the problem solving abilities to succeed. For example, he bought a “badly managed but an old time leasing company” as he described it, and the parts company that came along with it, and turned it into the third largest parts company in Canada. He built a radio station, bought a plating company, car and equipment leasing companies, and even a hockey team. Some of his motivation was to bring his family

together, but much came from a personal desire to be the provider of opportunities for those he loved.

Early Robert saw the repercussion that his expansions and business success offered his people in that many went on to opportunities of their own. “Every time head office... would phone and say, hey have you got somebody who would be a good assistant manager, a good prospect for a small office, I said "got your man"! So I was graduating people from my office, and it was easy to observe that, that created opportunities for me to advanced people. So, I was selling opportunity...and [we were] able to recruit good people”(RC 19.27).

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon’s goal, as long as he could remember was “to become a car dealer because there were certain things that I thought I could change and make things happen,” he said (GR 12.00). For Gordon, it was about “the movement, I like the action. I like - I'm a hustler and I like that” he commented (GR34.00). He sought opportunities for advancement through the sales positions and was keen to learn what he needed to know to build successful departments. His determination to succeed was only superseded by his desire to do this on his own, without having to take a financial partner beyond the bank.

What may have looked like lucky or even reckless decision-making to others, especially when it came to the horseracing world, for Gordon, was actually carefully scrutinized and deliberate looks at reasonable opportunity. Nothing is ever without risk, he would say, but if you want something badly enough, and believe in it, “it’ll happen!” he affirms (GR34.00). He had no illusions of ever picking the winning horse, but he approached even this opportunity with careful thought and study; though, looking back,

the story sounds much more magical in the illusions of good fortune. Picking and owning a hall of fame horse in one's lifetime is a dream that very few realize. Gordon owned two (On The Road Again and Matt Scooter). In both cases, he responded to an opportunity, took a risk and ended up in the winner's circle!

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Doug's father was an entrepreneur and he said, "I always envisioned myself owning my own company" (DH8.00). His business program and experience with the Royal Bank became a great financial "training ground" for those aspirations (DH 8.00). He remembered back to when he was young and looked for ways to earn income and do things, he would look at "opportunities to create something in an area that someone else was not in because there was an opportunity there. So being able to find that opportunity, analyze the risk, verify whether the reward was worth the risk, to me" was what he did, though he never actually occurred to him that he was an entrepreneur (DH 2.00). "Being an entrepreneur," for Doug, "is not being afraid to accept some risk for the reward that I see down the road"(DH 0-59). He accepted the idea of taking risks and risking future income because he thought that he would "have a better opportunity" (DH 28.00).

Doug's dad built in Doug a confidence for seeking out and seizing opportunities. Doug remembered being told to go for it, "even if you had bumps along the way" (DH 29.00). He remembers doing just that. Doug and his brother responded to an opportunity "pretty much on a wing and a prayer and an idea that my dad had, in an industry that, neither of one of us had experience in" (DH 34.00). My brother "was an insurance adjuster, I was a banker and we got into the food business" said Doug (DH 34.00).

Doug talked about the risk involved in a “conscious business decision” to look at opportunities in “countries that no one else would go in” (DH 35.00). Doug told of how he faxed every Canadian Embassy to see if barley was being imported into the grocery stores of their country. In the end, Venezuela had the most opportunity. “I flew down to Venezuela,” said Doug, “on a credit card that I had applied for and gotten- that they should never have given me- and pretty much maxed it out” (DH 28.00). He described his experience like this: “You get this young guy coming off the plane, he’s never been in South America, he doesn’t speak Spanish, and he’s going to sell the world” (DH 29.00). When Doug gave up the business side of his career to enter the political market place, he once again accepted the risks and responded to what he believed was opportunity.

***John Robinson (JR).***

John looked for opportunity since he was young. “ I had an allowance at the ranch, you know, growing up as a kid. After that, I was on my own to just make it,” recalled John (JR 1.00). In high school, he recognized the opportunity to provide lessons and instruments to families who did not have transportation to town. When he returned to ranching in the late 70s, he took the opportunity to buy land and develop it. Unfortunately, “interest rates went to 30 percent” and he was forced to “regroup” he recalled (JR 4.00). Back to ranching, he focused on fertilizer and soon developed a liquid fertilizer that he sold to farmers. Soon he responded to the need to provide customized machinery to apply this fertilizer and virtually “redid the way that fertilizer was applied on the prairies- maybe in most of North America (JR 1.00). His idea to put the fertilizer below the seed rather than on top of the surface was revolutionary. He fabricated created the equipment and retained the “patents on the flow divider that divide the fertilizer” (JR 5.00). To his

point in his life he has started at least 32 different operations. John admitted that he had no desire to quit on anything, but to do his best to create and look for opportunity every day.

John realized that part of his motivation for responding to opportunities was because he knew that others counted on him for “progress” which translated into opportunity for them as well (JR 1:16.00).

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy was looking for something different than the physics degree her parents wanted her to have when she started working at McDonalds Restaurant. She recognized the opportunity as she quickly moved up the ranks to the “shift manager of the whole show,” she recalled (CB 2.00). Over the following seventeen years she worked her way “through every single position in the market” (CB 5.00). She was responsible for opening, closing, and moving restaurants. She regularly hired over 500 employees yearly, took responsibility in HR, marketing and general management and most of this time she was still in her twenties.

When she bought into the franchises, she focused on the market and infrastructure. When that was done, and she became bored, she made a plan to buy the remaining 75% of the shares. She recalled, “I was the first female joint venture they ever did. I was the first of our size to buy them out as quickly as we did” (CB 11.00). She bought them out in January and a year later she was bored again. It was at that time she thought of the idea of creating Bennett Group of Companies that would sit on top and eventually other companies, along side of McDonalds, would all silo to the parent company. After setting



out on a journey to design the plan, she made real the opportunities in businesses across a large spectrum of interests (e.g., a spa, recruitment, real estate, industrial construction...).

Cathy recalled, “For a long time I thought it was only McDonalds, and it wasn’t until I started to diversify that I realized, no, no, no, this doesn’t have anything to do with the big Mac, this has to do with me being good at what I’m doing” (CB 49.00). “Because the more we expand, the more we see, the more we can do. But it doesn’t take much to inspire us, or light bulbs go off pretty fast” (CB 30.00-31.00). For Cathy, “the key is to make that path as broad and as big as possible and employ a whole lot of people who think bigger” (CB 31.00).

**Summary of participants’ perceptions that they could not stop seeing opportunity.**

I tried to visualize the unique way these entrepreneurs looked at their journey as I listened to their stories. I could only describe it looking like a growing, changing 3D maze. To them there was not just one choice and outcome. They could create new choices where there were none; new passageways. They could jut off in another direction and then head forward with speed and accuracy. They put themselves in a situation to respond, and because they could see when change was coming, there was an instinct that was the precursor to the solutions they had figured for such a turn. When they ran into roadblocks they were swift to try something different and never contemplate a wrong turn too long.

**Participants’ perceptions that they saw failures as opportunities.**

One thing was clear with each of these entrepreneurs. They looked at failures differently than most. As a matter of fact, each time I asked about failures, most would

look at me puzzled and wonder what I meant. I would later hear stories of losing money, businesses, and starting again, but they did not categorize it as failures.

***Participant Reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Richard recognized that there is an element of “intuition, timing, and luck” that comes with responding to new opportunity (RG 18.00). But when it comes to failures for this entrepreneurial thinker, being able to achieve balance is one of the most difficult things. It is a costly failure because it can wreck relationships and marriages. For Rick, marrying the girl he did has made all the difference. She is tolerant of his absences and supports him in his drive. As we considered above, he recognized how hard it was for her and was grateful that she did not insist that he be different.

I got a sense of what mistakes looked like to Rick in one statement he made: “If something sounds crazy, challenge me, force me to think” (RG 20.00). The profundity of this statement brought me to a deep realization that these entrepreneurial thinkers were masters at reconsidering, at recalculating, and at making a quick and concise correction in their direction.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Al remembered specific times when his instinct was wrong and when he had to recover quickly. One of those times was a choice he made to buy into a company that turned out to be over a half a million dollars converted. His only choice was to write his promissory note to the Bank and count his losses and learn from it. He considered his failures as reminders to be wiser, more diligent, and more careful entrepreneur. For him, failures are necessary to bring a balance to an entrepreneur’s life.

It would be wrong but if an entrepreneur left schooling and university and every time he placed money on the wheel it placed a return, and it went hunky-dory, that would be a danger, because they would never know adversity and if they never knew adversity, (1) I don't think they could handle it at a late date, also, (2) it teaches caution. (AM [2] 28.00)

Al argued that every entrepreneur should know adversity early in his or her career. When they did not, he got up, cut his losses, and took away a learning opportunity. He felt that adversity makes you stronger and wiser, and more able to handle what comes, especially as situations get bigger and risks are greater. For Al, what made him “stronger, better, wiser... was being number 11 in a family of 14” and having no money. He knew that there is no one there was no one there to catch him if he failed. “There isn’t money and you know you have to make it yourself, so, there isn’t a second chance” and you just found a way to make it happen, recalled Al (AM [2] 30.00). When Al knew that the second chance did not exist and there was no turning back. “The near misses,” he continued, “are thrilling, but you don’t want to try them five times” (AM [2] 53.00). As if to reinforce this sense of what I would call, calculated thrill, the phone interrupted our conversation. “I bought into an enviro park... it could go big, we could make a few million, or just break out. I don’t know. I am eager to be in it,” Al remarked nonchalantly (AM [2] 35.00). I experienced first hand this thinking that seemed to guide his opportunity seeking and thinking.

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc remembered making mistakes that he would identify as growing into businesses that he did not have the personnel to run. He told me about his decision to create a business center around his stores where he could provide all the services that he would normally access outside his dealerships. Luc got the Hertz franchise, a body shop

and parts stores to name a few. “Those businesses failed,” he recalled, “I lost a lot of money with those businesses” (LD 1:21.00). He quickly realized that even though the business fit with what he had created already, that he could not run them all and he did not have the right staff to do it. “I wasn’t going to put the little gray shirt on with the Hertz and go rent cars, and do that job, because I have three dealerships to run and 300 employees to manage,” he explained (LD 1:22.00). He also told about his idea of a Large used car center where all his dealerships could filter their used cars through. “There was an opportunity, so I jumped on it,” Luc recalled, “and maybe I should have waited, and maybe I should have passed” (LD 1:24.00). Luc recognized the value of timing, careful planning and giving it one hundred percent. “I realized that there are many opportunities to start up new ventures and to grow the business, and keep that entrepreneurial flower going,” said Luc, “but there is timing” (LD 1:22:00). Yet, Luc talked about perseverance. He said that you have to:

Trust your guts, trust that what you think- you can make happen and you don’t give up ... I always say, you know what, if I go bankrupt tomorrow, I’ll do something else. What it will be, I don’t know? But I’ll do anything. If it’s business, I can do it. I can. I can figure out how to do it. (LD 1:43.00)

Luc made it clear that he was not scared of making it fail.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne was the youngest of the entrepreneurial thinkers that I interviewed. The only real business she had ever started was a water and juice-selling stand before she was out of grade school. That did not mean that she did not recognize opportunity, and make plans that did not work well. Earlier she talked about the prize she won for her science fair project, and the fact that it did not work.

I was experimenting, like taking a risk, and doing this and you know maybe it will work, maybe, maybe it won't, but we'll try again if it doesn't... We actually never came to an actual conclusion, but when we presented to the judges, we explained that we tried this, and it didn't work. So we tried that and it didn't work. And in the end, our project, we didn't really get the conclusion we wanted, but there's also this we can do now. We had other solutions, and if we had access to this, and resources, and acquiring the resources is one of the steps of being an entrepreneur –knowing what your resources are. (AD 38.00 - 39.00)

Clearly, Anne recognized the value of something when it does not work. This was also exemplified in her real life plan to spend the summer in Germany when she was 16.

When she got there, she remembered wanting to come home.

I hated it; he [her parents] never let me come home. I stayed the two months and I learned a lot from that experience. I never came home, while I think that a lot of people would have made their kids come home when they called them crying, begging them to go home. My dad said, “find something to do,” and one day I took my backpack, got a subway metro map, and went to three museums in a day and came home. I had taken a bunch of pictures and I had learned so much, by myself. But I had had a good day, because it was up to me and I had to make it work as I was stuck there and I had to make it work. (AD 1:46.00)

Luc described his daughter as someone who hated the confines of “hyper structure school stuff” (LD 1:03:00), but was always able to find ways to make the system work and “is easily adaptable to different situations” (LD 1:03:00).

Anne spoke about a company that they had to create in college. At one point the whole team was ready to fire the CEO. She went to him and explained that he needed to do a better job or resign. She concluded that some people just “don’t see an obstacle as the end of the world, it’s a bump on the road” (AD 1:44:00). Anne said comfortably, “I don’t give up (AD 1:45.00).

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert talked about times in his life when business did not go as he had planned. He spoke of the times when banks recalled his loans. The first was in 1990 when cash, even for banks was tight. He had bought a parts company and had built up to be the third largest in Canada. He had been on the board of the bank, and when he stepped down, they suggested that he find another lender. Robert was forced to sell the company, even though it was profitable, in order to pay out the bank.

Later, he borrowed money from a different bank to buy a little radio station outside of Winnipeg. He was motivated to provide a broadcasting opportunity for his daughter to move back closer to home. He explained, “I borrowed a whole bunch of money, lost money every month for a long time, but whenever we could see it in our operating line, paid back the principle” (RC 27:00). He knew the bank manager so he was able to borrow enough money to secure the “country FM format when country was starting to grab,” he said (RC 28:00). When his friend retired, and even though the station was now breaking even, the new bank manager determined that they were “overweighed in media,” and even though his account had performed well, “we just need to back off the amount of investment we have in media,” he continued, “Please find another bank” (RC 28:00). Robert was forced to sell it for what they had invested. Five years later, that group sold it for ten times what they had paid for it. “Bankers can be fair weathered friends,” chided Chipman (RC 29:00).

When the energy crash hit in Alberta, Robert’s companies were again vulnerable. This time he had learned how to be diligent with his financial dollars so when the banks were once again struggling, he was able to spread the losses and reorganize. Today,

representing only one of his companies, National Leasing “receivable portfolio has reached over a billion dollars” (RC 32:00). Now “we are the second largest share holder of the Canadian Western bank,” he continued respectfully (RC 25:00).

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon echoed many of the participants’ beliefs when he said, “if you make mistake, you admit it, you admit it to yourself first, and you don't try to cover up a mistake. A mistake is a mistake. If you make a mistake, you admit it to yourself, and if you make it twice, you’re an idiot” (GR 1:36.00). Gordon’s philosophy emerged in the belief that if you do not admit your mistakes, you will likely do it again. “Your first loss is the smallest. Take it,” he concluded (GR 1:37.00). Gordon could not look back on what he called failures. He laughed as he told about losing lots of money on horses, paying for a steak so that he could better know what he was doing wrong in his business, and constantly seeking better ways to make his dreams become reality, but he did not consider them failures. For Gordon, he “never looked at those kind of things. I never once thought this guy’s going to go on strike or this can happy or that can happen. I never thought about that” (GR 1:10.00). Instead he had a belief that “we could adapt to it,” said Gordon, “I believe that we were sensible enough, that common sense would prevail and we could adapt to it- one way or another we would find a way to make it happen” (GR 1:10.00). If he realized something was not working, “I never told anybody that it wasn’t working. But I never did it again,” he admitted, “if I decided to do something and I could see it wasn’t working, well I would take a look at it and say how can I make this work now. This isn’t working this way. Do I have to change it? So if I have to change it, let’s change it or let’s make it work” (GR 17.00).

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Doug talked about those times in his career when he made mistakes, and probably would do some things differently, but he never considered them failures. Doug said, “Even when things were going to hell in a hand basket,” one needed to be concerned, but also needed to be able to get over it quickly. “If something goes bad, okay it went bad, Leave it,” he advised, “Move on. And let’s find the next good thing, right? I would say that we do a fair bit of that” (DH 40.00).

When I asked Doug about regrets, he answered that you “can’t go through life without regrets, means you did not make choices” (DH 15.00). He agreed that you could have regrets from missed opportunities as well as from failed ones. “There are some days in this job where I regret putting my name on a ballot. Some days more than most” he chided (DH 16.00). He recalled that he had some feelings of regret about leaving his business to enter politics. In your own business, you work hard, run your business with integrity, and you can be rewarded for it. “In politics,” said Horner, “you can be a really good MLA and still lose your job” (DH 26.00).

Doug remembered his father always believing that “if you think that you want to do something- just go do it,” Doug said, “even if you had bumps along the way” (DH 30.00). Doug watched his father live that belief, and worked hard to practice it in his own life as well.

***John Robinson (JR).***

Like Gordon, John really had a hard time thinking about failures. “I don’t look at the failures; they’re just learned experiences” (JR 1:02.00). In reality, “I don’t spend much time looking back,” he confided (JR 1:03.00). Yet, there was no easy money in his



life. In High School he created and ran his first business. After college, he opened a number of music stores and then moved back to the ranch where he built a custom farming business and raised purebred cattle. In his early twenties, he attempted to supplement the farm by buying acreages, developing them and selling them off. John told how the economy took a nosedive and the interest rates went to 30%. He was over leveraged. John recalled, “I got into a big wreck there... had to re-group and had to auction off real-estate” (JR 4.00). “So” John recollected, “it’s not been all straight ahead. There’s been the tough, all near wrecks a long the way... we survived them all... [and] maintained the ranch” (JR 5.00). Throughout the interview he talked about lessons learned and his solution based approach to, even, losing everything but their home.

it's just... learn from that... Fortunately, those times when you are on the verge of bankruptcy, you would look at your systems and figure out what is going wrong. Some of them are just circumstances. You get into a situation where you have a great depression of the real estate market, and your heavily involved in the real estate market. It's just bad timing. Those things happen. I've gone through two of those... tremendous learning experience. (JR 5.00)

When I asked him what it was that motivated him to get back up, he responded saying, “I don't know. It's just that, I just have no desire to quit on it. I'm just motivated to try to make it successful” (JR 1:03:00). Like Gordon, John recognized mistakes and was willing to continue to risk it all, over and over again. This was consistent with of each entrepreneur I interviewed. It was clear to John that his siblings did not necessarily share this same belief.

They work in the business and just don't have that desire... I think one of the reasons that maybe they're not, if you try something and it's not successful... two things can happen to you: one is you learn and try to pick yourself up and go on, or it can scare you and, I mean, you can get a little bit conservative over that experience... Because, you know, you get out there and risk your entire portfolio of assets... you've got to have the personality that can stand that kind of risk. (JR 3:00)

John also remembered stories of his grandfather's struggle through the great depression. His life was also filled with what some might have considered failures but, with each new challenge, he found ways to overcome them. Through the great depression of the 30s, he transformed his land and cattle farm into a dairy, and traded coyote skins when they were worth more than a cow. His grandfather "did whatever it took to hold that ranch together and so, I would say, looking back now, that he would probably be one of the great entrepreneurs who ended up with 32 sections of land in Springbank and founded a huge operation" he argued (JR 8:00). For John and his grandfather, overcoming the odds seemed to be part of a deep seated passion for beating the odds that kept them rolling the dice.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy recognized her ability to problem solve not only made risk easier, but fed her resolve that she could start over again, at any time, if she needed to. Unlike her father, who "agonized" over decisions or her mother who allowed decisions to "weigh heavy on her," Cathy realized that she was "okay with worst-case scenario" she said, "because nothing scares me that much" (CB17:00).

She told of the day she lost her son and how that put hurt into perspective for her. She would never worry about signing a million dollar loan again. She justified it by saying, "I just don't worry about that stuff. I don't go into it blind, naïvely, and I've said to my husband a lot – if everything blows up and we lose it all, I'll work at Wal-Mart as a greeter, I don't mind, and I'll work my way up there. So I don't see failure in the same way. I don't see business failure the same way" (CB 24.00). "I think it's really hard to not see failure as a personal thing," Cathy resolved, "versus it just didn't work" (CB 1:04.00).

I find when people think of a failure, they think about it in the context of, what more could I have done, and it's all my fault. And I think about, what more could I have done, and I'd better do it next time. So, manage the future don't manage the past. And it's a subtle difference, right, but it's very – take a failure and bring it to the next thing so you can be faster, sharper and more nimble for the next thing. But if you let it hang on you as a personal failure, then you start doubting your ideas. The idea's fine, like there's probably some post analysis you can do we say, yeah if we'd a done that, we'd have been successful. And it's important to do that, and it's important to say, you know here's the idea, here's why it didn't work, and, okay, we didn't see it so we'll have to see if the next time, and just move on. (CB 1:05.00)

Cathy argued that not every idea would be a homerun. But it is easier to risk trying because she has complete confidence in her problem solving ability, and knows she can come up with a solution, which tempers the fear of failure.

### **Summary of participants' perceptions that they saw failures as opportunities.**

This was the chapter that had the most impact on me. These entrepreneurs were constantly correcting their sites. Their lives were never characterized by “set-it and forget-it” scenarios. They were constantly recalculating and redirecting. And when they failed, they got back up, with confidence that they had determined what they could have done, and what they will do better the next time. They were not afraid to start at the bottom again- because they had enough confidence in their own problem solving abilities that they knew it would be a new opportunity to build up something else.

### **Participants' perceptions of confidence in their own problem solving abilities.**

For entrepreneurs, part of their ability to look beyond failures was their confidence in their own problem-solving ability. Each entrepreneur recognized this especially as they considered how they could have been a better student. In the section to follow, I will not go back into what might have been considered their failures, but present

the findings as these relate to the confidence these participants had in their own abilities to problem solve.

***Participant Reflections.***

***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

For Richard, his success has been in the fact that he has never had a problem with making decisions. He argued that decisions come easier when there is a confidence that he can make an informed decision, and problem solve when troubles do come his way.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Solving problems energized Al. “I am good at problem solving,” said Al, “get me a big problem!” (AM [2] 1:31.00). Throughout his interview, Al gave example after example of opportunities that he has had to problem solve. “The wheels never stop!” he admitted (AM 1:25.00).

Al’s daughter was also constantly solving problems. He explained that when the phone rings late at night, it is usually Shannon in some self-made crisis. She is always looking for problems she can solve: “fighting with bureaucrats” for supplies or “an incubator,” he recalled (AM [2] 47.00).

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc’s need to be able to problem solve was evidenced in his first job at IBM. He remembered times when he would go to the manager because, as he said, “I noticed the customer needed something and I could offer him the solution” (LD 14.00). But the company would not let him venture outside of their processes. It was his desire to be able to problem-solve that made him realize that he could not work for this company.

Luc's problem solving abilities were further evidenced in the ingenuity by which he attained and opened his stores without having to use his own money. He learned to recognize employees who had an entrepreneurial bent by how they reacted to situations and how they solved problems.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Anne's ability to problem solve emerged when she realized that she could figure out ways to survive various situations and even make them work in her favor. Though she hated her school, she found a way to "work the system, to get good grades and even get the nuns to like her" (AD 1:02.00).

For her, success at college was found in opportunities where she was able to solve problems within her groups, as well as in the companies they were assigned to. She recognized an ability to figure out a way to get where she needed to be, and devise solutions along the way.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert recognized his problem solving ability when he was a child, earning money for his bike. Throughout his life, he made plans that would always be at the forefront of all his decisions and problem solving opportunities. He had a confidence that came with the belief that he could figure it out. He took the lessons and cleared his glasses so he could see the train coming sooner!

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon found ways to seek out the solutions. Problem solving was as natural to him as speaking. He too, believed so confidently in his ability to solve problems that it made making decisions a little easier. Gordon continually situated himself in such a way

that he could see as many sides as possible. Then he could make the best decisions knowing that he could find solutions to anything else that came up. Opportunity in business and horse racing reflected his ability to find solutions for problems and seek out what he needed to know to make those decisions. He did this so naturally, that most considered it good luck.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Doug has had to develop patience when it came to releasing his problem solving abilities in the political realm. One of his frustrations has been that nothing happens quickly in politics. He gets “on a roll,” he explained, “sometimes when I am trying to figure out the different variations of what could happen when I take an action- a little bit like trying to figure out the chess moves 3 or 4 moves ahead, figuring out what people will do if I do a certain thing because I am trying to achieve that objective- What is the best way to stop the problem from happening before it happens” (DH 23.00). In politics, Doug contended, he could spend two years preparing and implementing something and people would think it happened quickly. He admitted that the process still frustrated him.

Doug’s first portfolio as Minister of Agriculture began with the BSE epidemic in Alberta. Not only did he have to lead a team to do what they normally did, but also they had the responsibility of people’s lives and livelihood at bay. The fact that he was able to bring it to a solution was a test of Doug’s ability to think on his feet and problem solve while under a provincial sized spyglass. (DH 24.00). Two of Doug’s frustrations with being an entrepreneurial thinker in the political realm “is not getting what you know to be right, done, because it doesn’t get done the right way” (DH 25.00). Framing it correctly enough can mean that you are able to bring others along with you in your way of solving

a problem. Because “there is a lot of corporate memory in these places: oh we tried that a long time ago and it didn’t work” it can quickly stifle a really innovative idea (DH 26.00).

In his own business, Doug recalled lying awake at nights “thinking about deals that I had done hoping they’d go through, or the guy that I sold a vessel of canola to, that he is actually going to pay me,” he said (DH 23.00). Even though the outcomes of some of these deals would be out of his control, His instinct to create possible solutions for variables, in advance, helped him feel more confident about making decisions in risky situations.

***John Robinson (JR).***

John’s philosophy of creating something new every day has been directly related to his ability to problem-solve. He is constantly on the look out for what is missing and what will be needed. He has lived with the motto “Never give up, ever” (JR 1:06.00) and that has sustained him through a lot of tough times and prompted those around him to also look for solutions.

Part of living on the solution side of his creations has been to adopt a system by which his organizations can run and become financially stable. John now plans for the tough times and has put processes in place to project problems and allow encourage his staff to appropriate opportunities to find solutions.

***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy talked about her love of problem solving throughout the interview. No matter where she found herself, she thrived in problem solving environments and found it easy to make the impossible-possible. At home she compared her father’s ability to make decisions to her own as she spoke of how he “agonized over them. And I don’t agonize

over them” (CB 17.00).

Cathy spoke of her ability to see things half full and to her that translated into seeing a solution in every situation. “If somebody said to me, well here’s a problem, you can’t do this because, what you mean we can’t? Of course we can,” Cathy mused (CB 3.00). “And even growing up,” she recalled, “one thing people around me always learn is never tell her she [speaking of herself] can’t because as soon as you say she can’t, she does. Because you’re only one solution away from making it work, so, we just have to put our thinking on and figure out what the solution is. And there’s always a solution,” Cathy recalled (CB 3.00).

Cathy’s father owned a pharmacy and so she remembered the conversations around the dinner table as a child. “I heard about small business issues at the kitchen table. That was typically where they were solved, too, right?” she remembered (CB 1.00). While she was not part of the conversation, she remembered being aware of all the “tactical things that you have to deal with as a manager and a business owner” (CB 2.00).

At sixteen years old, Cathy took that belief to work with her at McDonalds. She was promoted quickly as a leader.

And, the part that I loved, we call it shift management, so in essence, so it’s a busy Friday lunchtime, there is one manager who’s the shift manager of the whole show. You’re like the director and your directing and making sure the right people are in the right place doing the right thing at the right time. And you’re watching your KPI’s and monitoring everything. And that’s what I loved. I loved the problem solving in that environment. (CB 2.00)

Years later, Cathy read Malcolm Caldwell’s book “Outliers” and realized that she was thriving in an environment of constant rapid decision-making, analyzing risks and risks assessments that reinforced her confidence as an entrepreneur. She remembered getting a lot of practice at that restaurant because “no matter what problem came up I could always



find two or three solutions, so, it was very easy to be comfortable that you are able to figure out solutions and kind of solve problems” said Cathy (CB 4.00).

Cathy was quickly promoted through the ranks at McDonalds. As a young person, she had worked every position in the chain. She ran six to 10 restaurants at any given time: hiring, firing, marketing and general management. She worked for an absentee owner. “I used to joke,” she recalled, “ that I learned a lot of lessons on his dollar” (CB 6.00). The difference for Cathy is that while she made mistakes, she said, “I was able to fix them and rapidly recover which made me even less worried about making mistakes, and more confident” she said (CB 6.00).

After about 15 years, Cathy decided she wanted to be a McDonalds operator. She and her husband applied, though only one family member could hold a license. She recalled that interview:

We had an interview with McDonald’s, a panel interview where they had 12 guys interviewing my husband and myself. And Doug was terrified walking into the room, absolutely terrified. So we walked in, and they did this interview for about an hour and a half, trying to figure out how we work as a couple, and how we are going to deal with a new restaurant and at the end of the interview, the CFO for the company took the application file and he threw it across the table at me and said, you know what, I’ve looked at your net worth. You don’t have enough money to buy a McDonald’s restaurant, so why are we here, why are we wasting our time? I remember thinking, it was just automatic, the answer, and I said, look, I said you know if you want me bad enough, you’ll figure out a way to make it work. And that was it. What’s funny is, I had no idea what a joint venture partnership was. If you had asked me that day did I understand what that meant? I didn’t know what the language meant. But I was confident enough in my own abilities that I knew they’d want me. I knew that they’d figure out a way. (CB7.00-8.00)

Cathy was given a chance to buy the chain of stores that she had worked in for the past seventeen years. Cathy the first female to ever be offered a joint venture deal with a McDonald’s franchise.

Cathy remembered always wanting to be the leader. “Part of it,” she said, “is that I was impatient waiting for other people to make the decisions” (CB14.00). Her struggle was that the solutions seemed so obvious to her that she thought others were choosing to ignore the possibilities. Later she realized that others really could not see the solutions, did not see the answers that she could and had to learn to step back a little.

Many times Cathy would wonder why she was the only one who could see solutions. She recalled, “I feel like I'm on another planet. Like, what are these people saying. Like, this is, 1,2,3, this is what you do, this is why you do it (CB 57.00). Being able to see solutions can be frustrating for her “because if there's a problem, I want to give you six different solutions”(CB 1:09.00). So, on boards, in franchises, partnerships and even within her peers, she has learned how to distance herself from the situation. She told about one partnership she had that was, as she put it, “were very, very, very resistant to change, very resistant to new ideas and would question my competency in their industry because they felt my ideas wouldn't work there. I knew they would. So, self-preservation, I had to back away.” She continued, “Because I can't turn it off, now, I pick environments that let me exercise it. And if I can't exercise it, I move to different environment. That was a lesson I learned over thirty years, not something I knew when I was twenty-five” (CB 1:10.00).

As a woman, and an entrepreneur, this “quickness to solutions” as Cathy would call it forced her to find ways to learn skills to approach new ideas with more appreciation for egos around the table and the need to involve others in being part of the solution. “So I've had to learn skills, tricks and tools and ways to kind of get it out, even though it was my idea, to get it on the table and let them own it” she recalled (CB25.00).

“I learned an awful lot at these tables,” she continued (CB27.00). She learned how to be confident in work environments that were foreign to her and she looked for a way to level the playing field.

The confidence that she has in her problem solving abilities is a part of why she can test new things with fervor. Like Doug, government has been an interest. When I asked her about it, she responded by saying:

It's interesting because I don't want to go into politics. I want to be a leader. I want to lead the government. I don't want to be in opposition, I don't want to be a politician for power. I don't even really care if I get paid. I want to be a leader to solve problems. At the end of the day if I'm not, I'm okay with where I'm going to go because I've process that and I'll come back to business, and will grow the business. But I know I can add value to the solutions. And I see it every single time I have a conversation with somebody, like this waste management issue, you know, you know somebody says we got a problem with healthcare. Okay, well, it will take me 12 seconds to walk your hospital and say, look, here are six things that you've got to do. When are we doing them? And I can feel things, I and I can see things, and am not ashamed of that anymore, I don't think it's crazy that I can see things, and I'm okay that other people don't see it. So, I don't get frustrated with it anymore. And that's why I think I'm going to be a good leader. (CB 1:15.00-1:16.00)

Cathy told of her struggle to be normal, and thankfully, she is not! Her ability to problem solve is what gives her the confidence she needs to make a difference everywhere she steps.

### **Summary of participants' perceptions of confidence in their own problem solving abilities.**

The participants in this study had an innate ability to problem solve. This came out in their school experiences, the subjects they loved, and the way they looked at opportunities. In addition, confidence in their own abilities to problem solve also dictated what level of risk they were willing to take.

### **Participants' perceptions that they were risk makers.**

I think people misunderstand us as risk takers, as a risk taker, to me when you say that, it's like you're going to go, regardless, you are going to go. I think entrepreneurs clearly manage risk differently. We just process, okay here is good things, here's bad things, okay, this is good, let's go. Because I don't believe I take risks, that, in a risky way, I believe I manage risks. (CB 19:00)

Each interviewee had distinct understandings that confirmed two things: 1. They did take risks, and, 2. They did not believe they were reckless in their risk taking. In this way, as Cathy explained, they saw themselves as risk makers; they managed risk. Throughout their stories, it was evident that they understood that the decisions they made might have scared the average person and might have kept them from doing it again had they not been confident. In each case, these entrepreneurs did not see themselves as special or different; and they did not see themselves as reckless.

### ***Participant Reflections.***

#### ***Richard Gauthier (RG).***

Richard Gauthier not only considered himself to be entrepreneurial in his thinking, but he sought out, watched and surrounded himself with entrepreneurs on a daily basis. He contended that most of the success of this national association was due to the entrepreneurs around the table. There is "a huge element of risk in some of the decisions that we have to make," admitted Gauthier (RG 30.00). For Rick, the greater risk was in not making decisions quickly enough. Entrepreneurs often need to make decisions with minimal information. He said it was like saying:

Here's the deal fellows, we can have the fish or the meat. Now, in my opinion, I think the fish is the way to go and let me tell you why. But there is an element of risk. I can't guarantee that the fish isn't going to be contaminated. But there is less chance that we're going to have bad fish against the meat when we are having a plague of mad cow disease across the countryside. We can take a chance over here with the fish. (RG 1.00)

Rick drew on his French heritage when he argued, “In the entrepreneurial world, the entrepreneur, comes from the French word, preneur, to take. I’m a taker; I’m a risk taker” (RG 17.00). He was firm in his belief that risk is synonymous to the “natural born entrepreneur” (RG 15.00). He argued that risk is like a drug to an addict. It is what defines them, what keeps them going, what continually keeps them coming back. “The entrepreneurial spirit in among itself is fraught with risks” Rick contended, “To be an entrepreneur, it is about risks, it is about taking a chance, it is about doing something, seizing opportunity that others, more conservative than you, might say...you know, I’ll pass on that” (RG 16.00). “Entrepreneurship is this, said Rick, “that gut, that risk, that element of, that adrenaline rush that separates you from the other guy” (RG 18.00).

Each entrepreneur had at least one story about picking themselves up when risks went bad, dusting off the dirt and starting again. For Rick, the success depended on luck, timing, and willingness to risk.

One is willing to go closer to the edge of the precipice than the other. Every one of us who may be an entrepreneur, has a certain threshold for pain, has a certain threshold for, you know, we have different levels of conservatism... His risk, his tolerance for risk may be a heck of a lot higher than mine, He may be willing to go right to the edge of that precipice. I may say, you know me, I’m going to get three feet away from the edge and that’s as far as I’m going to go. But if I don’t go to the edge I may not see, oh my God, there’s a pot of gold down there, He would have seen it, and if he sees it, he has a better chance of grabbing it than I do because I wasn’t able to see it because I couldn’t look over the edge. But I came close to the edge. (RG 20.00)

For Rick, success as an entrepreneur is directly related to the degree that one is willing to risk.

***Al MacPhee (AM).***

Al recognized risk in his own life and the frustrations that it often caused his wife. “You’ve got enough nuts saved for the winter,” she would say, “Even the squirrel has

enough brains to stop. Don't go out in the lightning storm to get more" (AM [3] 12.00). For Al, he could not think of anything better to do because no one else was out there. His take was "If I come home, it was a win. If I didn't come home, so what, I died was doing what I wanted to" (AM [3] 12.00).

***Luc Duval (LD).***

Luc recognized his risk acceptance level when he compared himself to his wife. "It's funny," he said, "because my wife wants to be an entrepreneur, like if I tell her she's not an entrepreneur she'll get mad. But she's not. But she thinks it's what you have to be. You're good because it has nothing to do with that" (LD 1:51.15). He argued that she is clearly not a risk taker. She will not try new things until they are tested. She needs structures and processes. While she is good at running her store, Luc argued that they are very different. He looks for new ideas, is revels on risk, and is stimulated by trying new things.

***Anne Duval (AD).***

Luc saw his own risk taking tendencies when he looked at Anne. She proved that she was not afraid to risk from young on. She took a "blind risk" when she chose a college program that she had no idea about. "I had no idea what I was getting myself into. All I knew it was a hands-on school and I like hands-on things," she recalled (AD 1:13.00). Her growing experience in real life problem solving has given her an awareness of a deeply rooted sense of confidence in her own risk-taking ability.

***Robert Chipman (RC).***

Robert assumed responsibility and risk at a young age. "I had serious responsibilities. Five dollars was a lot of money" (RM 8.00). He further explored his

comfort level with risk when he began working for a brokerage company and got interested in the stock market. For Robert, he risked, and through the good and bad he risked again. For RM, “business success involves considered risk,” he said, “there’s got to be a risk” (RC 45.00).

***Gordon Rumpel (GR).***

Gordon did not believe he took risks that were careless or uncalculated. “I believe that we could adapt,” Gordon argued, “I believe that we were sensible enough that common sense would prevail and we would adapt to it. One way or another, we would find a way to make it happen. That’s all there is to it” (GR 1:10.00). He did make it happen. He built an empire from nothing and had some fun watching those calculated risks make it big in many different arenas.

***Doug Horner (DH).***

Doug Horner’s favorite entrepreneurial story was when he went to Venezuela on a guess; with borrowed money and a credit card that he claimed he should not have qualified for. For him, that risk paid off; but for each entrepreneur, risk also trumpeted in the realization that it may not. It would be a gamble they always seemed to accept. “Somebody told me once that most entrepreneurs have probably been close to bankruptcy or bankrupt at least once,” Doug said, “because you take risks, and some are going to work and some aren’t” (DH 11.00). “Not everyone is cut out to take a risk,” he said, “I used to tell people what I did to get my business off the ground and they’d go, they’d never do that, they wouldn’t even consider it” (DH 15.00). Doug believed that he was someone who had the “self-determination” to want to “build something that would generate income, that would generate jobs, that would generate a livelihood for my

family, and myself and ...be the one who would be in control of that” (DH 0-59). For that, he would take the risk.

***John Robinson (JR).***

John described a difference between his siblings and him as a level of willingness to risk. John faced the precipice of bankruptcy and still knew that he had no desire to quit. Instead, he looked at his systems, analyzed what went wrong, fixed it, and learned from it for the next time. Sometimes, it is just the particular circumstance. “You get into a situation where you have a great depression of the real estate market, and your heavily involved in the real estate market. It's just bad timing. Those things happen. I've gone through two of those” (JR 5:00). He also realized that he had the personality to be able to stand risks. He explained:

I am a good blackjack player [earlier he talked about studying the game for 50 years]. I like the risk. I like to gamble. So maybe it's a bit connected to that. Because definitely you are out there risking and gambling. People don't like to say I'm a gambler, but, in those kind of businesses there is some gamble to it. You play the odds and try to get them in your favor, which is what everybody's trying to do, by the way you organize, by the way you finance, by the way you manage your businesses you can take a lot of the risk out of it. (JR 6:00)

John recognized the value of building the right team, putting the right systems in place and creating a product that is needed, but he also recognized that even the best of ideas if it is untested, will be a risk. John lives to get the next things started, but he recognized that not “everyone is cut out to take those risks” (JR 57.00). His son is a capable a leader and manager of their plants. He is gifted in operations and follow-through. Even so, John argued, “I don't think he would go risk the business and his home on some venture” (JR 57.00). John did many times.



***Cathy Bennett (CB).***

Cathy saw a confidence develop through her experience in management at her first job. Not only was her ability to make rapid decisions what made her good at the job, but continually being allowed to make critical analysis of risks and to lead her team based on those decisions, inspired her to be a “stronger and more confident” person in her business decisions and risk assessments throughout her life (CB 3:00). Cathy also believed that her ability to bring her head above the trees, scan, assess the risks and then come back down to approach the issue with confidence made her less risk adverse than others. She recognized that she had an attitude of risk, though it did not seem to her like risk because she could see multiple solutions and possibilities that made sense of the logic. She also remembered how often her husband would say, “Cathy, you say worst-case scenario and I say it a lot— worse case scenario this is going to happen and typically, I’m okay with worst-case scenario because nothing scares me that much. [If it did] it wouldn’t even be on my radar,” she responded (CB 17.00). Because of “worst-case-scenario”, Cathy looked at risk with a confidence that most do not have.

Because I think as an entrepreneur we all recognize that everything’s not a home run. But we’ve just we just got to get to first base. And when you get to first base you get to second base, so it’s, I think sometimes people look at entrepreneurs and say they are always looking for the home run. I think that’s a bit of a veil that we wear. I think we’re looking for those base hits that get us the home run, that give us the point- if that makes any sense. We just do it fast. And we can process and think about a risk; risk mitigate a little faster.  
(CB 6.00-7.00)

She argued that she is able to break down risk into smaller steps, assess her ability to provide a solution, and make an assessment based on her understanding of her own ability.

She also talked about managing risk rather than being adverse to it. “I really, really, really struggle with people that say I really can't do that, I'm afraid of that. You know,” she explained, “be afraid of cancer. You know there's lots of stuff to be afraid of. Don't be afraid of mistakes. The twenty-year-old version of Cathy wouldn't have been able to understand that, because I was trained, by everybody around me to be afraid of mistakes” (CB 1:06.00). She continued:

Even, even working at McDonalds, I remember my dad, for the first five years I was there, he was so angry at me, so angry at my choices, so angry about the decision, and it wasn't until I kind of worked up through the restaurants and ended up being a supervisor that he said, well at least you're not in the restaurant anymore. It was almost that my choice was a failure, which was very, very, hard for me, especially now when I know that choice was probably very liberating to me. Because I was an entrepreneur every time I went to work, for eight hours, running my shift, with my twelve or thirteen person crew. I was an entrepreneur every minute of it. It was exciting; it was fun. I remember simple things, trying to run off breaks on a Friday lunch hour and everybody would look to me and say Cathy will figure this out, no sweat and I always did, I always figured it out. So that validation that I could hone my ideas was great. He never ever wanted me to be in that environment. He always wanted me to go get a trade, or go to school and learn, learn to DO something. But I knew how to do something. (CB 1:08.00-1:07.00)

For Cathy, her feeling that she was abnormal finally drove her to seek outside help and to reflect deeply about her gifts as an entrepreneur, as a leader and as a woman in both those shoes.

### **Summary of participants' perceptions that they were risk makers.**

These entrepreneurs were blind to risk. I am not even sure they actually craved it as much as they accepted it as a worthy cost for being able to solve problems. The fact that a blackboard of problems to solve, fills their attention, it makes sense that the desire to problem solve could be unstoppable and risk able.

### **Summary of How Participants Perceived Themselves in the World**

The more I listened to their stories, the more I realized that an entrepreneurial thinker's keen ability to solve problems came directly from the fact that their minds were always going. It would make sense that the opportunities that were invading their minds are actually problems that needed to be solved. They were drawn to opportunity because problem solving was something they loved, like the challenge of a good chess game. They held the advantage because they were good at it, and that advantage gave them the upper hand when they are trying to think of all the moves three or four ahead of an occurrence.

It is no wonder they felt confined in walls, in rules, and restrictions that limited what they could learn, explore and retain. It is no wonder they sought out their own answers when they needed to supplement the particular set of problems they were tackling. It is no wonder they were frustrated with curriculum and the rules about how, when and where things must be learned. It is no wonder they were frustrated with memorizing textbooks of information and spewing the same content out on a test sheets; when this material seemed to have little relevance in solving all they must juggle and solve in those days. In these interviews, I was continually reminded of the personal struggle, both in trying to be understood by the world as well as their trying to understand themselves.

### **Summary of the Lived Experiences of Entrepreneurs**

Again, the purpose of this study was to more closely discover the essence of the entrepreneurial mind and to garner insights from perceptions of entrepreneurs such that might benefit educational organizations and their leadership. In collecting the interview

data I asked questions that would help me better understand how entrepreneurs perceive their own development as entrepreneurs and how they might perceive themselves in the world. The result procured a rich description of the impact on their development as well as how they see themselves in the world.

The first research question looked at how entrepreneurs described their own development. There seemed to be no relationship between who might have been entrepreneurial in their families to one becoming an entrepreneur. Secondly I looked at the participants' perceptions of school and its impact on their becoming more entrepreneurial. Again, there were no apparent relations between what they learned in school and whether or not they would be entrepreneurial. Interesting both positive and the negative feelings emerged as they talked about many aspects of school and, especially tests. What was unexpected was that they were clear about what would have helped them learn. The last part of this chapter described how participants considered themselves in the world. Participants were consistent with each other in with respect to the idea that they had come to see themselves as different in their thinking; as persons whose minds never stopped, as persons who are driven to think bigger; as ones who are natural at seeing opportunity and who see failures differently, who have confidence in their own problem solving abilities, and who believe they are makers of risk.

In addition, I would like to include one entrepreneur's summary of how she described herself and those she knows who are entrepreneurial thinkers.

An entrepreneurial thinker is:

innovative, creative, passionate, committed. They don't rock very fast. If something happens they just get back up and keep going. They don't go back in their heels too often. They tend not to complain a lot. So there's obstacles, but they're so focused they're not thinking about, oh, poor me, or poor, oh poor... Now there are those

people out there, that as a small business operator, they are ready to go out as a victim. But I think, real true entrepreneurs are very, very accountable. They own their decisions. They own their choices—they don't blame them on anybody else. If they go in on something and it goes bankrupt or it goes bust, they accept it, and they accept it for them selves and they don't blame their employees, or blame, external forces. They have a very reasonable and realistic view of stuff, I think. (C: Cause they're already onto the next thing) yeah, because it wasn't that big of a deal, right? And failure's not that big of a deal. They don't measure themselves by what ever the failure is...Cause you have to fail to learn. It doesn't shake us off our game its just part of the path. (CB 32.00-33.00)

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

This study was a re-telling of the remembrances, stories, and narratives from the lives of nine men and women who have lived the phenomenon of thinking as entrepreneurs. It is in anticipation that their stories may help to guide and inform our understandings of the phenomenon of entrepreneurial thinking and provide insights for education and other sector systems. For two of the participants, only their story and legacy remains today. Shortly after my interviews were completed, Robert Chipman and Gordon Rumpel passed away as a result of their battles with cancer. They both left a legacy within their family, community, and the business world. They left a lasting impact on me.

In this chapter, I will summarize the study and review the rationale for this study, the problem statement, research questions, and the Methodology. I present the findings in relation to the research questions in the form of key findings or contributions from the study. These key findings and contributions prelude the researchers interpretation of possible implications for education, leadership and further research. I finish this chapter with some concluding remarks.

#### **Review of the Rationale for this Study**

The purpose of this interpretivist qualitative study was to explore the thinking of a selected group of entrepreneurs through their stories and remembrances of their lived experiences. Participants were chosen due to his or her extended interest, involvement and influence in plural and public sectors over and above their traditional roles in the private sector. Interviews and discussions provided opportunities for the participants to

explore their own thinking, their decision-making, and their engagement in their various sectors through their stories.

The aim of this research was to discover the essence of the entrepreneurial mind, as related to selected individuals who worked entrepreneurially outside of their roles in the private sector, and to explore the adaptive potential of entrepreneurial mindfulness for those working within educational systems.

The participants were chosen because of their record of involvement in multiple sectors, or as was the case with Ann, because of her involvement in an entrepreneurial program. It was apparent when comparing the personal stories and reflections of the participants that no matter what initiative was started or what they were involved in, their stories reflected similar beliefs about school, their personal strengths and weaknesses, and their metacognitive reflections. Through the stories, distinctiveness in the description of these entrepreneurial thinkers began to emerge. These findings suggest that an entrepreneurial thinker is not only an entrepreneur (initiator of a new venture), but could also be a person who has a disposition toward opportunity recognition and problem solving skills that is evidenced in many realms of his or her influence.

The study was initiated by identifying entrepreneurs who were involved in entrepreneurial activities beyond business. Participants were chosen from across Canada and from diverse age groups. At the time one participant lived and went to school in the United States. Two things were significant about this. First, she was the daughter of one of the participants and I was able to interview them together. This was valuable in that they added detail to augment each other's stories. Second, this was significant because the daughter was attending an entrepreneurial college, whose website boasts five #1

rankings by Entrepreneur Magazine, and a consecutive #1 ranking since 1999 by U.S. News and World Report ([www.babson.edu/about-babson/at-a-glance/pages/rankings.aspx](http://www.babson.edu/about-babson/at-a-glance/pages/rankings.aspx)).

I met with and interviewed each participant, using semi-structured questions to guide the topics of their story. I recorded the interviews, transcribed and compiled themes from the data by analyzing each transcript for key ideas and themes in the related stories. I presented these findings in Chapter Four, both thematically and in the sequence by which they were interviewed.

The findings and insights are the outcome of the stories told during the interview process. These findings contribute to the research and practical understanding of the mind of the entrepreneur (see Key Finding #3). More specifically, through this study it was possible to consider a unique definition of those who are entrepreneurial (see Key Finding #1), beyond that associated with business start-ups.

The findings from the interviews were examined with consideration of extant and current literature. The themes were organized using the research questions.

### **Review of Research Problem Statement and Research Questions**

This study, *The Mind of an Entrepreneur: Exploring Lived Experience*, was an investigation of the question: What is the essence of the entrepreneurial mind and what insights can be gained from perceptions of entrepreneurs that could benefit education sectors? Throughout this study the following research questions were used as a guide:

1. How do these participant entrepreneurs perceive their personal development as entrepreneurs?



2. How do these participant entrepreneurs perceive themselves and how do they interact with, adapt to, and influence society?
3. From these participant entrepreneurs' perceptions and stories, what insights could be garnered with respect to how they see themselves, how they think and act entrepreneurially; and what could be learned from those with an entrepreneurial mind that might have adaptive potential for those working within educational systems?

I will review the findings using these questions as the framework for discovery and reflection.

### **Review of Dissertation Research Methodology**

As indicated in Chapter Three, this interpretative and qualitative research was conducted by adapting narrative and phenomenological approaches to suit the purposes (as above). As indicated above and in Chapter 3, this research blended and adapted two research approaches. The researcher focused on understanding of entrepreneurial thinking through the stories of those who lived and experience the phenomenon (the essence of the entrepreneurial mind) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Creswell, 2009).

Participant recruitment and interviews were conducted from March to October of 2013. Participants were self-identified entrepreneurs through their published work and/or through their identifiable involvement in two or more of the sectors (public, plural and/or private). The 13 participants were chosen from a wide range of demographics with respect to age, location, and sector involvement. This enabled me, as researcher, to depict different perspectives (see Table 4.1). Twelve people were interviewed, but in the end only the data from nine participants were used (refer to Chapter Three for more detail).

Interviews were conducted using open-ended, semi-structured questions that were designed to gain insight into the thinking of these entrepreneurial participants by provoking memories and through the telling of their stories. Participants were encouraged to tell their stories in such a way that one could gather knowledge about the importance that was placed on certain elements of their story, the significance in what was remembered, the cultural influences, and the personal awareness of the phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990). Common themes emerged from analyses, though the journey of each participant was different. The stories of their experiences served to inform and construct understandings and meaning of the complexities associated with the phenomenon of entrepreneurial thinking. It was important to maintain the integrity of the stories, the meaning, and the remembrances as these were told.

### **Key Findings and Contributions From the Study**

Before sharing what I learned about the mind and thinking of these entrepreneurs, I would like to return to the work of Johnson and Waterfield (2004), and Creswell (2013) to restate that this study was limited, by design, to a small group of people who shared the phenomenon. I do not offer generalized conclusions, rather the ambition of this study shed light on a particular phenomenon and on the lived experiences and entrepreneurial mind, as was understood and conveyed by these participants. While the results were intended to be generalizable to “identifiable, specific settings and subjects,” there was no intention to have them be universally generalizable (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 220). My intention was that the insights from the data might initiate future conversations on potential alignments between entrepreneurial thinking and formal educational systems. It is also pertinent to consider Webster and Mertova’s (2007) reminder that narrative

inquiry “does not strive to produce any conclusions of certainty” (p. 4). Instead, it is informed by philosophical assumptions of interpretivism (Smith, 1989). In other words, as the researcher, I will present the findings, themes and insights presented here in the best way possible, as evidenced and gleaned from the interviews. Narrative inquiry then is made real through social actions developed through the construction of meaning by the researchers (Atkinson, Coffey, & Delamont, 2003).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that it is the focus of a study that determines its boundaries. The focus of this study was to explore the minds (thinking) of selected entrepreneurs, who have had an influence in arenas that would be considered to be private, public and plural sectors. Through this exploration of their lived experiences, deeper understandings of this phenomenon together with direct and indirect insights with potential implications for education systems were garnered.

I wish to gain a greater understanding of the essence (or the heart, nature, or fundamental quality) of the entrepreneurial mind. No transference generalizability to all schools, teachers or entrepreneurs has been intended but, rather, this was purposely avoided. This said, I do believe that there are key findings that might have potential benefit to those who are willing to join me in the exploration of insights of these entrepreneurs.

As researcher, my interpretation of this exploration of the lived experiences of participants revealed four findings and contributions, with respect to the phenomenon of the mind of an entrepreneur. In the following summary, I look at what the literature has said about this topic and the contributions to knowledge as a result of this study. At the end of this section, I provided a table that illuminates these findings.

The first key finding concerns the idea that one could expand and adjust the understanding of these entrepreneurial thinkers, and that one could consider an operational definition of an entrepreneurial thinker that would be consistent with each participant. The second key finding looks at the way these particular entrepreneurs perceived their own development. This is significant for educators of both K-12 and college programs. The third key finding is how these participants perceive themselves in society. This could be relevant for public and plural sectors as they look for new ways to sustain programs and solve issues. The fourth key finding is the potential for awareness regarding conditions that can complement entrepreneurship and its development. I will begin with the need to expand the understanding of entrepreneurial thinking.

**Key Finding 1: Expanding and Adjusting the Understanding of an Entrepreneurial Thinker as Related to These Participants and Their Stories.**

Following an analysis of the data, and considering the limited reach of this study, there appeared to be a need to adjust what I now understand about these entrepreneurial thinkers. Through this study, I found that I needed to reconsider the existing layers of definitions and build on the understanding of how these particular entrepreneurs think, which might be useful in identifying entrepreneurs who think similar to this participant group. This contribution to theory was unexpected as grounded theory was not the intent of this study. However, a brief rationale will be presented, followed by an example of how generically our culture uses the term entrepreneur. In summary, I offer a way of looking at these participants that might also be useful to other sector and educational leaders. I will begin with a brief rationale.

There are definitions that have fixed and accepted meanings (Gee, 2008). In the same way, there are others that are more like concepts; in they have accepted meanings because we can relate it to something we know like a theory (tacit meaning).

Entrepreneur is such an example. Not everyone constructs meaning the same way and our understanding of a particular construct will differ. “Meaning is something we negotiate and contest over socially,” Gee (2008) argued, and “are ultimately rooted in negotiation between different social practices with different interests by people who share or seek to share some common ground” (p. 12). Meaning can be agreed upon for a period of time, become routine, or change when something occurs that causes a meaning to be questioned—possibly when something new is introduced into the social practice and the meaning is no longer consistent.

This study has challenged my conventions of a singular meaning for entrepreneur and I argue that there might be room to look at and build on existing definitions of an entrepreneurial thinker.

### **Multiple understandings regarding who an entrepreneur is.**

Early in this study, I was invited to a reception that included business and community leaders from across Canada. My interest in those attending, and inevitably the conversations, centered on those who self identified that they were entrepreneurs and how they evidenced that understanding.

One person said she considered herself an entrepreneur, but her company went bankrupt and she was afraid to try it again. While she wished that she were still working for herself, she would never again take the risk. Another person I talked to had purchased a franchise and had opened a store. She expressed her frustration when her husband did

not agree that she was an entrepreneur.

One guest explained how he was an entrepreneur. He told of his life dream of having a company with over a thousand employees. In response to that desire, he opened his own marketing company and was firm in the belief that when it reached a thousand employees, he would retire.

An older gentleman told me briefly about his own business, and then explained passionately about the foundations he had been able to start and fund. He told of how much he enjoyed helping to solve problems on school and community boards. He also told how grateful he was that his businesses were running well enough that he could follow some of his passions of solving community issues and helping the less fortunate. He was afraid that he would not have enough time left so he could make a dent in the all the places he could see needed help. Opportunities were impossible to ignore, as they were everywhere he looked.

I left that night with the realization that all of these individuals could fit within the current definition of someone who started a new business venture, but each person was different in how they thought and in their conceptualization of the entrepreneur that they were.

I started this study with a look at definitions and interpretations of entrepreneurs that spanned centuries. The meaning of the word entrepreneur, as described by Cantillon (1931), was one who is 'a taker'- a 'risk taker'. Our understanding of entrepreneur was further developed as they emerged as a result of war (e.g., Baumol, 1990; Landstrom, 2010) and then later through industrialization (e.g., Schumpeter, 1934).

Early, entrepreneurs were distinguished by their natural propensity toward risk and considered unique due to rare instinct and foresight (e.g., Marshall, 1920; Mill, 1844); those who could see things differently and were driven by possibilities (e.g., Schumpeter, 1934) But later were more often defined by the idea that they profited as a result of their propensity to risk (Menger, 1971). In the following centuries, definitions most often positioned entrepreneurs in business. One such understanding lies within Gartner's (1989) definition of someone who starts a new venture. Even so, within that definition, there are still many interpretations of what that would look like. From participant stories, came a desire to build on past thought (e.g., Mill, 1844; Marshall, 1920; Knight, 1995) and expand the definition of entrepreneur. The possibility that there may exist an entrepreneurial thinker was considered.

#### **Rationale for building on the definition of an entrepreneurial thinker.**

There appeared to be few formal uses of the term “entrepreneurial thinker,” in the literature. Some derivatives, such as entrepreneurial thinking were used by Yura Bryant (2012) as a way of viewing the world as a marketplace. Dewald (2014) referred to entrepreneurial thinking in his report on business, in the *Globe and Mail*, as a way of thinking that is entrepreneurially focused. Both were consistent with other uses (e.g., Murphy, 2014; Nambisan, 2012).

The four individuals, in the story above, had different conceptualized meaning for entrepreneur and seemed confident or at least reflective in their meaning making. The first two believed they were entrepreneurs in the sense that they were “new venture starters.” Gartner (1988) defined entrepreneurship as “the creation of new businesses” and that entrepreneurs are the creators (p. 21). Gartner has been criticized because this

definition does not account for the different reasons that a business may be started or closed (Moroz & Hindle, 2011). Bruyat and Julien (2001) criticized Gartner's de-contextualization of entrepreneurship and argued that there are entrepreneurs who create business opportunities for the value the business serves and less for the profit it produces. They also criticized Gartner's work for excluding the social component of innovation where value is not always monetary and profit is not always the indicator of achievement (e.g., Van de Ven, 1993; Aldrich & Zimmer, 1986). Homer-Dixon (2000) joined others (e.g., Cuervo, Ribeiro & Roig, 2007; Bruyat & Julien, 2001) in the claim that the capacity to be entrepreneurial can also be a solution to social and political problems in our complex and interdependent society.

The other two entrepreneurs related ideologies that could fit into many definitions. For example, Sarasvathy (2001) considered problem solving and processes of decision-making in powerful entrepreneurs. Her findings resembled experimentation that is leveled by the availability of resources that one could invest and/or lose. Moroz and Hindle (2011) argued that though she gained tremendous insight in the understanding of an entrepreneur, she failed to consider purposeful planning, environmental factors and the perceptions that the entrepreneur personally brings to the table. Sarasvathy's (2001) work also favoured marketplace and profitability entrepreneurship. Her study supported the growing articulation around the notion that there is an entrepreneurial mindset that exists beyond new venture start-up (Gibb, 2011). This created a divide in definitional literature (Moroz & Hindle, 2011; Botsaris & Vamvaka, 2012) and more specifically between practice and theory (e.g., Baumol, 1968; Bird, 1989; Chia, 1995).

More recently, dialogue around a different kind of entrepreneur, a social



entrepreneur, has challenged current definitions and questioned the roles of business entrepreneurs as they construct new positions of social change (e.g., Dees, 2001; Peredo & McLean, 2006; Austin, J., Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006; Dacin, et al., 2010; Swanson & Zhang, 2010). Dees and Battle Anderson (2006) argued that social innovations further blur the division between business and philanthropy through the creation of sustainable social enterprises.

Childress (2010) looked at social entrepreneurs as “idealists who are committed to solving social problems... focused on education” (p. 1). Her study encouraged business leaders to help establish funding and partnership in an attempt to transform education using their influence and intention. Chubb (2006) feared they would take over the schools and defended the call to keep business entrepreneurs out of the education system.

The term intrapreneurship was coined as an attempt to account for the entrepreneurs as an employee who worked entrepreneurially within an organization (e.g., Hisrich, 1990). Educational entrepreneurs are more often referred to as teachers who leave teaching to start a business that will provide a service focused on improving learning (Leisey & Lavaroni, 2000; Kent, 1990).

I believe that the context for each of the participants in this study was more complex than being ‘a creator of a single venture’. Problem solving and opportunity recognition were vital and a natural parts of each participant’s story and their contexts were not limited to business venture creation. Participants introduced a different kind of entrepreneur through their stories. Consider the eight year old who figured out ways to pay for his bicycle (RC); the president of a billion dollar corporation who focused on ventures that would not only bring his family together, but would make a difference in

the community they lived in (RC); the young girl who went against her father's dreams and served burgers at a fast food restaurant (CB); the young doctor who spent her whole life solving problems for the hospitals she served by following a mission of making things better (AM); or even the teen who quit school in grade 11 because he could not see the value of an exam (GR). I came away from this study believing that there is a need to build on the present definitions of an entrepreneurial thinker.

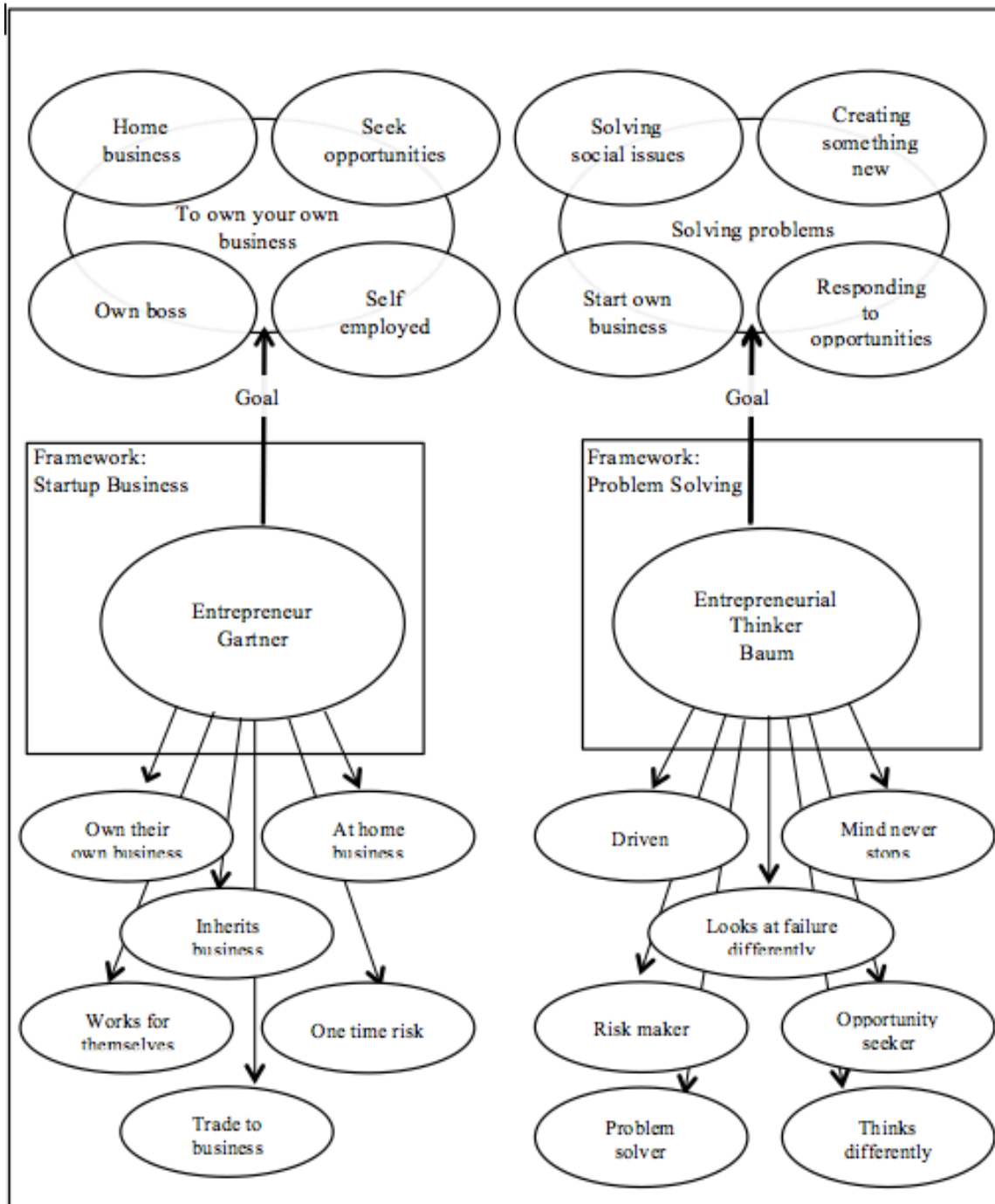
**Building on the definition of an entrepreneurial thinker (ET).**

I wanted to look at entrepreneurs who did not fit our current definitions and yet might give evidence of being creators, innovators, problem solvers, and risk takers. I believed that if I could see how entrepreneurs think, what they remembered about their journeys, and what they believed about entrepreneurs, I might gain some insight into the essence of their thinking. From this mixed group of people, I offer a description of these participants:

These entrepreneurial thinkers can best be described as entrepreneurs who have an intuitive capacity to see new possibilities and create solutions.

In the following figure, the entrepreneur as described in Gartner's (1989) work is compared with the entrepreneurial thinkers who participated in this study. In the case of Gartner's (1989) definition, entrepreneurs are defined by the creation of a new venture or start-up business. In the case of the entrepreneurial thinker in this study, they are recognized by their innate ability to problem solve and visualize possibilities. According to Gartner (1988), an entrepreneur could even start a simple operation out of their home, or could inherit a business. They could also be a pharmacist or a doctor where part of their training included having your own clinic or drugstore. In any case, it could even

consist of a one-time venture with very little risk. My question is this: What if the risk goes bad? Are they still entrepreneurs?



**Figure 5.1.** Comparing definitions.

On the other hand, the entrepreneurial thinker in this study encompassed many unique abilities, such as the idea they are driven, they look at failure differently, they are opportunity seekers, their mind never stops, they are risk makers, and they think differently. They defined themselves not so much by the result, as by how they navigate through the problems and bring them to a solution.

Gartner's (1989) entrepreneurs set out to start a venture or a business. Entrepreneurial thinkers in this study more often set out to control their own destiny, to make a difference, and to solve problems in response to a keen awareness of opportunity. Starting their own business was often in response to those solutions. As a result of this study and the look into the lives and stories of this group of entrepreneurs, there is reason to believe that a further definition of this kind of entrepreneur should include their intuitive capacity to see new possibilities and create solutions.

The following findings further serve to bring a greater understanding of the mind of these entrepreneurial thinkers by considering their perception of their own development as entrepreneurs.

### **Key Finding 2: Entrepreneurial Participants' Perception of Their Own Development**

A further look at the findings revealed some important thoughts about how participants saw their development as entrepreneurial thinkers. This is especially salient for me as I consider the urgency of possibly recognizing and nurturing young people, who think like these entrepreneurs, toward success in their entrepreneurial journey. I will present the themes that emerged as these relate to the research questions.

**Research question 1: How do these participant entrepreneurs perceive their personal development as entrepreneurs?**

Participants considered their personal development as entrepreneurial thinkers as they reflected on their role models, and on their experiences in education. The findings suggested that much of these participants' perception of their ability to problem solve seemed to be a natural talent and passion for inquiry, versus something that was learned. Eight out of nine participants had difficulty recalling significant mentors, or specific people who may have influenced their thinking entrepreneurially, however, they were all clear about the perceived impact that education had on their development. The detailed outcomes from the interviews considering two themes: Influence of role models, and the Influence of education on the entrepreneurial thinking of the participants, will subsequently be thematically evaluated.

***Influence of role models.***

This research exposed no memory of direct influence on the participants' entrepreneurial thinking from a grandparent, parent or mentor. Only four participants had grandparents who were considered entrepreneurial (only two people had met the grandparent they had spoken of). Even fewer participants had parents who had owned a business, or to their knowledge been thought as being entrepreneurial. From those known to own a business, participants identified only one grandparent or parent who they would have been considered to be an entrepreneurial thinker based on the belief that their businesses were more often the result of a profession, rather than innovation. No participant could think of a mentor who could have helped them become entrepreneurial

in their thinking. They did, however, describe people who gave them good business advice or encouraged them to follow their passion.

Only one of the participants had a sibling who they would consider to be similar in their passion for inquiry or problem solving. Though siblings had the same exposure to people and the same upbringing, the passion for inquiry or problem solving ability was not inherent. Over half of the participants recognized one or both of the characteristics in one of their children. However, none could recognize these characteristics in all of their children.

The participants could not identify anything in their environment that had encouraged them to being entrepreneurial thinkers. If anything, many participants felt that they had been punished for wanting to problem solve and try new things (e.g., CB; AM; GR; LD; AD). Two of the participants, and their siblings, spent most of their educational years in highly structured boarding schools consequently, parental impact was lessened and teacher impact was strengthened. Even so, the ability to think entrepreneurially did not vary for those in a boarding school situation. Furthermore, even though the participants seemed to think entrepreneurially, only half of the participants identified one of their children who they considered to be like themselves in their ability to problem-solve or think innovatively.

Participants, felt that they would have, or did benefit by growing up and/or going to school in a culture that encouraged critical thinking and problem solving. One participant was encouraged by his father to try new things, and one watched his father solve problems by trying new ideas. The rest of the participants could not link their development as entrepreneurial thinkers to any familiar or mentored

relationship. These entrepreneurs sought mentor relationships to help them navigate through the running of their businesses, not to teach them how to be problem solvers or see opportunity.

***Influence of education.***

Participants had distinct memories of their education, both through the impact of teachers and how they were viewed as learners, and by their classroom practice. In the majority of the cases, teachers had a negative impact. The ones who were remembered fondly were teachers who made learning practical and solution focused. For those who attended college/university, there were post-secondary teachers who influenced them in a positive way by encouraging them to think for themselves through real life examples including problem solving.

The perception of these participants was that they remembered more often being discouraged from thinking differently. Some participants told stories of being punished, both at school and at home, for having different ideas or for wanting to do things differently. For example, one participant recalled that her teacher most often responded to her suggestions negatively, because they would mean extra work when they just didn't have the time. This participant recalled being told to settle down and simply do things the way they were always done.

Eight of the nine participants believed that teachers did not recognize that their students (participants themselves) were bored in school. They told stories of boredom due to teachers' failures to challenge their thinking. From the remembrances of these participants, their teachers more often viewed boredom as defiance and this, consequently, became punishable both at home and at school. As a result, those interviewed found ways

to put in their time by getting involved in extra curricular activities such as sports, music, public speaking or clubs.

Eight of the nine participants were critical of exams. For some, they would memorize the material the night before so they could pass the exam and comply with the requirements. In another case, the participant quit school so he would not have to write exams. The participants argued that exam marks did not reflect their classroom and project success. Eight of the nine participants felt that they would have enjoyed school and been more successful if had they been able to learn differently. They remembered their own learning when it had included practical problem solving opportunities.

These entrepreneurial thinkers wished that teachers could have nurtured and engaged them in their natural problem-solving abilities. Cathy believed that educators needed to “widen the river” that entrepreneurial thinkers are speeding down rather than try to “slow down the water” to keep them focused on the prescribed learning (CB 59.00). They also argued that schools needed to sell entrepreneurial thinkers on the value of post-secondary training. Lower exam marks would affect class marks and often became barriers that would limit their ability to go to college or university.

Participants responded positively to problem-solving opportunities, especially as they related to the real world. Labs and case studies were opportunities where they could discover solutions. They needed teachers to recognize that their creative ideas had value. From the perspective of these participants, teachers more often missed the opportunity to inspire these entrepreneurial thinkers through problem-solving and real life experiences. They recalled the stories of how they could not pass a test, yet they knew how to make it work in situations, in labs, and in real world experiments around them.



Often the teacher responded to them with messages that overtly or even covertly communicated a dislike for their attitude, an intolerance of their distractibility, or just a sense that they were not competent as learners. These participants remembered teachers who had motivated them by making learning relevant and engaging. Participants felt that what they learned from these teachers did make a difference in the way they approached their work.

Participants believed that their teachers associated academic success to future success. Trade school was not valued as an academic option, and school grades dictated college entrance options. The participants who had not been able to attend college felt they would have benefited from the option. In college, for those who were eligible or able to go, participants found more opportunities to explore and test problems that had real world value to these participants.

The educational experiences of the participants in this study spanned 90 years. Their stories were so similar in many respects that they served as a reminder of how little school organization and/or our approach has changed in four generations. All of these entrepreneurs had experienced success in what they had accomplished in their lives, whether they had completed, or quit, school or college. Those who finished often did so because they were motivated to get into programs or take opportunities that they believed required a formal education. Only one of the participants felt “school smart.” In other words, she had no trouble memorizing the required curriculum but she did so motivated by a desire to participate in the clubs and activities the school provided. School did not come easily for most of these participants because it related to memorizing and less to practicalities—yet that they loved to learn. This contributed to the feeling that they were

not school smart. There was a feeling that businesses more often evolved from trades and business education. There was discontent in a perception that college would have provided for them an opportunity to gain better business skills and yet one needed to get good grades in school in order to go on to post secondary.

These entrepreneurial thinkers were considered successful in spite of their school experiences, whether they had finished school or college, or even whether or not they had attended college. Each participant believed that a strong school experience might have allowed him or her to learn some important skills. Participants believed that the use of problem solving in the classroom, using real world situations, might have helped them avoid later lessons that had potential to bring negative results. In spite of this, each participant listed his or her ability to find solutions, their drive to find and learn from business mentors, and their willingness to use mistakes, as learning tools, that were key in their development and success.

The participants in this study recognized elements of being an entrepreneurial thinker that could not be taught (e.g., problem solving, recognizing opportunity). There was little support for the idea that entrepreneurial thinking was learned in school, fostered by their parents or grandparents (in most cases, quite opposite), or nurtured through their environment.

### **Discussion of participants' perceptions of their own development.**

From the decade of a newly industrialized society and the success of its entrepreneurial counterpart, researchers have tried to understand the entrepreneur so that their skills could be nurtured and replicated (Kuratko, 2003; Krueger, 2009; Hentschke, 2009). According to researchers, the question of how entrepreneurs are developed is of

key interest in the race for economic success (e.g., Murphy, Liao & Welsch, 2006; Acs & Audretsch, 2005; McDonald et al., 2004).

Through the stories of these participants, one could argue that their ability to think entrepreneurially was something they were born with and was not perceived as something that was taught or nurtured in them. Robinson (2001) argued that every child is born with a natural curiosity and that our need to prescribe learning can discouraged curiosity in children. For these entrepreneurs there is little support for the role of grandparents, parents or mentors on the participant's ability to think entrepreneurially. Only two of the participants believed that either their grandparents were entrepreneurial, and only one felt his father was. Past literature (e.g., Shapero and Sokol, 1982; Orhan, 2005) suggested that there are push and pull factors that drive entrepreneurial action. Two participants spoke of grandparents who started things as part of settling in an area and a need to survive. The data suggest that in some cases, these grandparents' activities could have been pushing factors. Orhan (2005) described these factors as necessity driven decisions to start something in order to survive, versus an actual pull toward innovation that would result in entrepreneurial action.

Four participants told of generational stories where they felt grandparents could have been entrepreneurial. There appeared to be little connection between the participants' remembrances of their grandparents and their own desires to be entrepreneurial. In all but one case, they had little or no contact with their grandparents. In addition, none of the entrepreneurs recognized a similar desire to think entrepreneurially in their own siblings or children. Similarly, there was little support for the idea that they, themselves, had mentors or that they had been able to mentor their own children to think entrepreneurially.

However, Guzman and Santos (2001) argued that situational factors, such as one's social, political and institutional environment, are essential for stimulating entrepreneurial behaviour in people who already are motivated and energized. Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) argued that there is no indication that someone can be taught to be an entrepreneur, which seems to go with the belief of these entrepreneurs. Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) contended that entrepreneurship could not be taught in school. Rather it is a style of behaviour that develops over time through relationships with parents and teachers early in life.

Kruger et al. (2000) argued that attitude, not personality, drives entrepreneurial action and that attitudes are learned based on one's situation and environment. However, these entrepreneurs recognized that even though their siblings had experienced the same parenting, schooling and mentorship, they did not think the same, show the same drive, risk, or were they problem solvers. There is less indication, from the beliefs of this group of entrepreneurs, that this attitude was learned.

Mitchell and Smith, et al. (2002) suggested that entrepreneurs use mental maps that meld specific cognitive processes of resources, will, and ability, into a script. This script will become the precursor to the creation of a new venture. Mitchell (2000) argued that there is evidence to show that these cognitions can be fostered and developed. The participants in this study recognized that they had engaged mentors to learn how to run a business, improve performance and build their leadership capital.

Researchers, such as Bryant (2012), argued that we are all born with the ability to be innovative and be creative, and that our conformist philosophy of authority has directed how we teach and how we raise our children making them afraid to pursue their

own path. Early educational theorists such as Dewey (1938), Holt (1923-1985), and even Mezirow (1923-2014) considered critical thinking and solution finding as part of a crucial process in being “transformers of that world” (Freire, 1970, p. 60). Robinson (2001) argued that children were born with the ability to think critically and creatively, and put the blame on a culture of learning that stigmatize being wrong and reinforce the belief that mistakes should be punished. He argued that this practice has forced children to abandon their creative abilities for what was deemed correct. Even early theorists, such as Von Mises (1891-1973), criticized educators who limited and routinized learning in such a way that different ideas are punished and limited. According to the work of Eisner (1997), attitudes are thoughts and feelings that develop as a result of what an individual has experienced. In this study, participants’ teachers and the expectations of the school system had deeply affected what these participants remembered about their educational experience—both positively and negatively.

### **Summary of Participants’ Perceptions of Their Own Development**

The findings suggested that there was little connection between mentors and the ability of these entrepreneurs to think entrepreneurially for the following reasons:

- There was no consistency regarding grandparents, parents or other mentors on becoming their becoming entrepreneurial thinkers. Only a couple of the participants were able to identify a parent or a grandparent who might have been entrepreneurial thinkers. None of the siblings in any of the families of origin were entrepreneurial thinkers. For some of the participants, their parents followed a parent or grandparent into a work choice (e.g., politics or a family business) but this did not mean that they were entrepreneurial thinkers. The participants could

not remember a time when they had learned to think in an entrepreneurial manner.

Most knew that they thought differently than others, but not everyone recognized this way of thinking as entrepreneurial.

- The findings provided no consistent connection to grandparents, parents or mentors that could account for the participants' ability to think or act entrepreneurially. On the other hand, participants recognized parents and/or grandparents who were examples of integrity and hard work. There also appeared to be little that a parent, grandparent, or mentor could do to discourage their child from coming up with new ideas and wanting to try new things. For example, participants gave examples where a parent, or a teacher would be frustrated with the child who wanted to do things differently. The response was to punish an attitude that participants believed emerged from boredom. Often participants felt like they were criticized for wanting to try new things, having new ideas and for having the answers first. Participants attempted to stop this propensity for problem solving, but felt that they were unable to.
- In school, these participants expressed a desire to have had opportunities to learn real-life lessons earlier. They argued for the opportunity to problem solving real life applications as a way to engage in learning.
- Most participants did not like to write exams, as they disliked activities that did not appear to reflect the reality of what they knew versus what they had memorized. In every case, participants described school as boring and recalled struggling in subjects that did not reflect real life.

The findings pointed to the idea that for these participants there was little indication that entrepreneurial thinking was taught to them by outside influences. There were only a few examples of times when school programs or teachers encouraged or nurtured them or valued them as problem solvers. Instead, participants remembered being punished for wanting to do things differently.

### **Key Finding 3: Entrepreneurial Participants' Perceptions of Themselves in Society**

This study provided a look into the mind of an entrepreneurial thinker via the descriptions that emerged through the participant stories and through their perceptions of how they had interacted, adapted and influenced those around them. Their stories provided connections that reflected their perceptions of themselves as entrepreneurial thinkers.

### **Research question 2: How did these entrepreneurial participants perceive themselves and how did they interact with, adapt to, and influence society?**

I asked the participants to tell me their stories. Perceptions of how they saw themselves were consistent even though their stories, their ages, and their entrepreneurial activity resulted in different business and plural ventures. The participants described themselves in the following ways: they thought differently, their minds never stopped, they were driven to think bigger, they could see opportunities everywhere, they saw failures differently than others, they were confident in their problem solving abilities and they felt they were risk makers.

### **These entrepreneurial participants thought differently.**

Attempts to understand the entrepreneur began with the early theorists and re-emerged in the early 80s, with a resurgence of interest in identifying entrepreneurial traits

and a rethinking of some of the previous theories on entrepreneurial ability. Trait theorists reflected a belief that the degree to which one was or was not an entrepreneur could be directly related to the number of traits one did or did not exhibit (McClelland, 1961). More recently, Sarasvathy (2001) approached the difference in the way entrepreneurs think by describing them as effectual thinkers. From her study of business entrepreneurs she argued that they shared a belief that they could manipulate and control the future.

The early role of the entrepreneur was born out of a society where a need for change was directly related to survival (Landstrom, 1999). What has been apparent in this study is the notion that this thinking does not just exist in the start up of a venture but had implications in all realms of the individual's life. In the case of this group of entrepreneurial thinkers, it was a mind-set that could not be overlooked. They thought differently than the common businessperson or leader as they were driven by the need to solve problems. Orlikowski (1996) recognized that there must be an ability to adapt and edit ideas, expectations, and attitudes based on what he or she saw as an opportunity. From the stories of these entrepreneurial participants, there was a perception that this ability exists, and that it was more often the result of a non-stop thinking process that overshadowed everything they did and thought. Whether entrepreneurs gather experience, possess innate talents, or have the ability to use past knowledge effectively, much time and effort has been spent attempting to determine what these innate characteristics might be and how they are developed (Brandstätter, 1997).

As evidenced through their stories, all of the participants believed their thought processes were different than those around them—including family members.



Participants identified those differences through their own description and according to what they had heard others say about them. While more often these particular remembrances described who they were as an individual, there was a consistency amongst participants that was discernable.

This study built on Sarasvathy (2003) work in that she recognized that there was something different about entrepreneurs that seemed to tie “them together as a species” (p. 205). She described it as a language, in their stories and especially in the way they solved problems. Similarly, each of these entrepreneurs recognized that they thought and acted differently than did others who were not entrepreneurial in their thinking. The difference was more than how they “transformed an idea into a successful firm” (Sarasvathy, 2003, p.205); it was in the way they looked at problems across everything they saw and experienced. They also shared stories of their frustration with those around them who could not see the same solutions. All participants were not afraid to make tough decisions; they could make decisions rapidly (which was consistent with Stevenson’s (1989) observations; and they were willing to take responsibility for their decisions. One participant described entrepreneurial thinkers as “sophisticated... polished... ruthless... street fighters... savvy business people... a hybrid of everything” (RG 24.00). The participants made their own boundaries and rules, and were aggressive in their desires to test the untried. This thinking existed in all of the areas of their lives, not just in business.

It was also observed that each participant recognized the strain that they had put on their spouses, their families, or on their relationships. For the participants who were married, not one felt that their spouse was like them; rather they described their spouses as being opposite. In each case there was a conscious effort, on the part of both spouses,

to understand and accept their differences in order for the relationships to survive.

**The mind of these entrepreneurial participants never stopped.**

Unlike most of the literature surrounding entrepreneurs, the stories of these entrepreneurs clearly described their inability to stop thinking about solutions to anything and everything they encountered. Frank's (2014) definition of entrepreneurial thinking most closely reflects the stories of these participant entrepreneurs, especially as it relates to a relentless posit of growth, an unusual stamina, a desire to write ones own rules, and taking challenges without gambling (see below 'risk-makers'). Unlike these entrepreneurs, Frank then related the skills to economic profit and the belief that these skills can be easily learned by training one's mind to see products differently and by finding ways to improve them. The participants in this study strongly believed that the ability to see things differently, and especially problem-solve was something they could always do. One specifically said, if she had learned it, she should have the power to shut it off. None of them could.

These entrepreneurs recognized that the activity of problem-solving never stopped, even though they had tried to 'shut it off' (e.g., LD, AM, RC, CB, GR, JR). Some described their mind with spinning wheels that would not stop (e.g., LD, AM, CB, JR). Many thought they probably had Attention Deficit Disorder (e.g., LD, AM, CB, GR, JR). For these participants, seeing solutions to problems, big and small, made vacations and rest almost impossible.

The participants were constantly looking for ways to distract their minds from problem solving. Participants found short reprieve in activities such as golf and other intense sports, fishing, hunting or gambling. The activity needed to be something that

would require their full attention and concentration in order to maintain the reprieve. It was for the same reason that the participants felt that holidays were not restful. These participants all felt that these tendencies affected their relationships since it was a constant effort to avoid alienating those around them in favour of recognizing opportunity and setting out to find solutions.

**These entrepreneurial participants were driven to think bigger.**

The findings supported the notion that these entrepreneurs were driven to think bigger by a perception of greater opportunity. This was consistent to earlier studies (e.g., Gartner & Baker, 2010) regarding entrepreneurs. In this study, this drive appeared to be one of the origins of their discontent. Participants felt like it was a struggle to be satisfied with where they were because they were always living beyond the present. Participants were driven to figure out what they did not know, and to find solutions for obstacles that would come in the way of moving toward opportunity. He/she felt held back by those who could not give up older ideas, solutions and rules. One described this drive as an adrenaline rush that would keep them coming back for more (RG).

These entrepreneurs recognized that they live in the next opportunity versus what was happening in the present. Eight of the nine participants felt that celebrating accomplishments was more like living in the past and was not as fulfilling. One participant explained that by the time she accomplished what she knew she would, she was well along into the next opportunity. She also recognized that those around her needed to celebrate successes even though, in her mind, she had already moved on. Kruger et al. (2000) argued that attitudes, rather than personality drive entrepreneurial action. They deemed that attitudes are driven by culture and environment, which is not

what came out of the stories of these entrepreneurs. Family members exposed to the same environment and teaching, did not have the same drive as these entrepreneurs.

Each one that I asked about retirement felt that they would never really retire. Participants had tried to stop this propensity toward constant problem solving but were unable to sustain it for any length of time. Over half of the participants articulated a fear that life would be done before he or she could finish responding to the opportunities that would materialize in their thinking. The more senior participants expressed their regret as there was recognition that they could have been even more involved, or they could have ventured even more than they had.

All of the participants were driven by a solutions approach. Each one had an unshakable belief that he or she could problem solve their way out of almost anything. They were driven by the possibilities of each moment and their resolve to persevere. They could see ways to solve things. They could see steps to solutions that made making plans a challenge that they loved. These entrepreneurs were equally driven to solve issues for others as well.

These participants also were driven to ownership. The sense of this could parallel the insatiable habit of linking entrepreneurs to definitions and associations in commerce and directly relate to profit centered motivation (e.g., McKenzie et al., 2007; Van de Ven, 1993; Aldrich, Rosen & Woodward, 1987). For the entrepreneurs in this study, however, ownership equated being able to make decisions, having a significant part in change, controlling their own future, making their own way, and achieving his or her goals. Similarly, ownership allowed them to respond to opportunity and make a difference for people, within their influence.

**These entrepreneurial participants recognized and responded to opportunity.**

An ability to respond to opportunity has been a popular topic in both current and past research, and consequently in our understanding of how entrepreneurs impact our economy and our society (e.g., Sarasvathy, 2001; Gibb, 2011); this was no different in this study. The participants were motivated to look for, and to recognize opportunity. Mitchell et al. (2002) would refer to this as entrepreneurial cognitions, or the use of mental models (scripts) as a way to piece together previously unconnected information. They related this cognition as key to the process of creating any new venture. Cognitions influence one's ability to make a decision about venturing into something new, according to Mitchell, Smith, et al. (2002). Entrepreneurial cognitions would be the map that carefully balances the plausibility of success at initiating and implementing a successful endeavour. This learned behaviour did not take into consideration the participants' recognition that they see solutions almost as quickly as they see need. One could make a case that this would account for the participants' willingness to problem solve, but does not consider the rapidity of ideas or the sense that they can not "shut it off" (L. Duval, personal communication, April 15, 2010). On the other hand, I argue that this would be a valuable way to teach young business students how to recognize, calculate and implement a new business.

Later, Mitchell et al. (2005, 2010) argued that intuition guided an entrepreneur's ability act; which may or may not be innate. Intuition has long been associated with an entrepreneur's ability to predict the market, to avoid risk and take chances. Mitchell and colleagues' (2005) conception of entrepreneurial intuition involved the joining of a non-conscious influence with circumstances, or outside knowledge, in order to affect how one

forms attitudes and perceptions and leads to entrepreneurial intentions. They argued that by understanding and defining the construct of entrepreneurial intuition, one might better practice, teach and nurture it.

From the participant stories in this study, there was evidence of what could be called intuition, though there was a unanimous belief that they could not remember not having it, or when or how they learn it.

Botsaris and Vamvaka (2012) compared models of intention and entrepreneurial behaviour, concluding that traits models have some explanatory power regarding those who chose to be self-employed as well as those who started businesses successfully. Situational factors, according to Shapero and Sokol (1982), are described as entrepreneurial activity that is guided by push and pull factors. One is pushed to being an entrepreneur as a result of negative circumstances, or drawn in by potential opportunities (Orhan, 2005). From the stories of the participants, the pull was recognition of their own abilities (especially as it related to problem solving), drive, and unstoppable recognition of opportunities. In each case, these participants felt like their success was impacted directly by their ability to see opportunity and to find solutions.

Each one of the participants recognized what it was like to respond to opportunities. Richard reminded me that entrepreneurs make sacrifices—be it giving up financial security or the sufferance of relationships. It was his perception that not everyone would be willing to make those concessions (RG). Moroz and Hindle (2012) argued that while there were significant relationships between the person and opportunity, that not everyone could recognize opportunity. Even Knight (1921) recognized and alertness to opportunity that was unique to entrepreneurs. The participants saw solutions

quickly, and in ways that many others did not. Consequently, these entrepreneur participants may perceive the opportunity as a lesser risk. In each case, having the opportunity to respond to the needs of others, and to be able to make their own rules were powerful motivators and rewards for these entrepreneurial thinkers.

**These entrepreneurial participants saw failures as learning tools.**

These entrepreneurs looked at failures as learning tools rather than personal failures. It took each participant a moment to recall the times when things did not work out, and what they had done to resolve the issues. In the literature, more is said about how entrepreneurs calculate success as it relates to risk than was said about how entrepreneurs deal with failure. The participants in this study recognized failure as learning opportunities and seemed less afraid of it. Morris et al. (2011) saw entrepreneurs as active in their experiences, able to “construct a sense of self” that allows them to build, cope and survive both positive and negative experiences (p. 28).

In each case, the participants did not actually call these remembrances “failures;” instead, they remembered them as things that did not work, or things that they would, or could have fixed. Sometimes the repair needed to be made at a systematic level; other times it was a personal fix with a commitment not to do it again. Each participant felt that they were good at recalculating, recovering, and regrouping.

These entrepreneurial thinkers found that part of recovering from mistakes was admitting the mistake and then learning from it. They learned how to use setbacks as learning tools and found a way to do it differently—to make things happen. Their rhetoric echoed the need to use failure as a tool to learn to be wiser, sharper, more diligent, and more mindful no matter whose mistakes they were. They found that adversity fostered

balance, and helped them learn the lessons earlier, hopefully, while the costs were not as great.

The participants were unanimous in their belief that something was not a failure just because it did not work. Participants would not tell themselves that it had failed because they could see multiple options for offering new solutions. Participants shared the belief that when they set out to do something, it was because they knew it would eventually work. They were motivated to solve the problem, so the number of attempts would not be the issue. When they hit an unexpected setback, they were challenged to find new solutions. These participants perceived or framed failure in the knowledge that they had the ability to find solutions to make whatever was needed to work the next time.

**These entrepreneurial participants were confident in their own problem solving abilities.**

Problem solving has become the buzzword over the last few years, and describes what entrepreneurs do best, even outside of the business realm (Strauss, 2013). For most of these entrepreneurial thinkers, problem solving pervaded every part of who they were from as early as they could remember. The participants had such confidence in their ability to find solutions to problems, including ones that had not yet occurred, that fear of risk was lessened. These entrepreneurs saw and acted on what could be, with such confidence that they did not simply have to settle for a repeat of the past, but trusted their own abilities in such a way that they could embark on a new future (Morris et al., 2010). More recently, studies by Duening (2010) and Mitchel, et al. (2007) looked at cognitive skills as a factor in successfully simplifying information so that the logic of connections can be made and used to create innovations. Accessibility to “scripts” or combinations of



knowledge structures makes decision-making easier and supports the innovation that is needed to stage new ventures (Mitchel, Smith, et al., 2002, p. 10). For each of these entrepreneurial thinkers, their passion for solving problems was evident. The confidence that supported the way they approached life appeared to be formed through the lens of their life events (Morris et al., 2010).

The findings suggest that these participants confidently sought new opportunities, reflected on their own mistakes, and faced obstacles that often had little to do with their own making. These entrepreneurial thinkers seemed to have an awareness of their own limitations, mostly specifically as it related to resources, though they were masters at finding a way to make things happen in spite of resources available. They were confident in their decisions because they could find solutions to the problems that could arise, even if it meant starting again.

Though the participants argued that seeing solutions for problems was natural and that they did not have to agonize over the idea of making decisions, they were frustrated by barriers that slowed or restricted these opportunities. The bureaucracy of corporate rules and memory frustrated those who were invited to be on boards or committees. Slow political decision-making processes made it difficult for these entrepreneurial participants. There was a perception that bureaucratic systems, especially political ones, slowed and limited an entrepreneur's decision-making capabilities.

The participants expressed an optimism that reflected their practice of managing the future and not the past. They found themselves looking ahead at solutions, similar to the moves on in a chess game (DH). These participants perceived their advantage was in their ability to predict multiple scenarios and work back to the best possible move. They

were invigorated by the challenge of predicting roadblocks and stopping problems before they would happen.

**These entrepreneurial participants were risk makers.**

Many early theorists held to the belief that an entrepreneur was an individual who held unique and specific abilities (e.g., Cantillon, 1931; Kirzner, 1979; Knight, 1931; Schumpeter, 1934). Knight (1931) was one of the first to argue that there was a difference between the Leibensteinian (1922-1944) capitalist that looks at everything as a business venture, versus the one who sees problems to solve. Researchers claimed that entrepreneurs had rare and instinctual foresight as risk-takers (Marshall, 1920), that they were unique (Mill, 1844), and that they were profiteers (Weber, 1904; Menger, 1871), or that they were different based on learned or a naturally gifted cognition (Mitchell, et al., 2007). Cantillon (1931) defined the entrepreneur as the risk bearer because of the idea that no one has perfect foresight. In this way, he or she must bear the risk.

The findings suggest that these participants saw risk differently than most people. None feared risk; at least the debilitating kind of fear – instead, they perceived that they made risk happen. One participant offered the explanation by saying that she makes risk happen by considering the good and bad, and then weighing it against her understanding of her own ability to solve the problems that may prohibit its' success. To those looking on, this would appear to be risky. To these participants, if they thought there would not be a solution; each one agreed that they would not even consider it. They also recognized that, in some cases, it was the challenge or the risk made the end result even more rewarding. Morris, et al. (2011) saw entrepreneurs as risk-takers who consciously recognize the need to shift their plans, modify, adapt and recreate back ups as they see

risk increase. Stevenson (1989) argued that their ability to make decisions quicker drove entrepreneurs toward opportunity, especially as it exists within uncertain markets. While this describes why an entrepreneur would risk, it doesn't look at the possibility that they see solutions to problems everywhere and in every situation as these entrepreneurs described it. Their sense of accomplishment was also augmented by the knowledge that they had accomplished something that others had not. The possibility of failure was always real, but not as strong as their need to solve problems and respond to opportunity. Failing to do so left more regrets than the risk of losing it all, for these entrepreneurial participants.

These entrepreneurial thinkers recognized that they were often considered to be lucky or even reckless. For the participants, what looked like luck was more often a series of carefully considered moves that included pre-planned solutions for problems that may or may not occur. This corresponded to Sarasvathy's (2001) study of business entrepreneurs. The author argued that entrepreneurs use their personal strengths and available resources to improvise solutions. The participants in this study held the belief that the most careful plan still had its risk, but for each of these entrepreneurial thinkers, it was a greater risk not to respond.

These entrepreneurial thinkers calculated risk and were not reckless in their endeavours. They are able to critically analyze risk, with minimal information, and act based on a clear and calculated assessment of their ability to manage that risk. They agreed that they still played the odds, because they recognize that leading edge means risk, but they would do so based on their knowledge of their own limits. Participants

spent a great deal of time listening, learning and testing their abilities—long before they would approach an opportunity.

These participants had a certain threshold for pain. In each case the participants related their willingness to risk, to the degree by which they believed they could solve the problems that might emerge as a result of the risk. These entrepreneurial participants were able to adapt, make choices, and solve problems while their perception of risk is constantly being redefined. The entrepreneurial thinkers in this study understood the limitations of their own abilities and measured it by past learning experience. In this way, the participants became less the recipient of risk, and more the maker of risk. The Schumpeterian (1942) idea that entrepreneurs disrupt stability in order to maintain the tension and create change could reflect these participants from the view that they were bored in the status quo. They could see the need for change and responded to the opportunities based on their ability to formulate solutions that others didn't recognize as quickly. From their perceptions, a heightened awareness of deficiencies drove change practices to keep the system running effectively. It was an alertness or a knowledge that something needs to be fixed (Knight, 1973) that drove their need to create or respond to change. Murphy (2007) argued that “episodic knowledge” forms the base of opportunity recognition (p. 171). In many ways, this study further substantiated the degree to which these entrepreneurial thinkers gathered new knowledge and called upon the old, as a way of ascertaining the risk of any given opportunity.

The word “skill” was associated with entrepreneurs in studies by Robert Baum and his colleagues (Baum et al., 2001). The authors argued that a combination of motivation and skill was key in the success of entrepreneurial pursuit. However, it

implied that if one is motivated to do something, and can learn how to do it, that one can. This does not account for the ability to recognize those opportunities, driven nature of their problem solving, or the notion that the skill is possibly something that was not learned.

### **Summary of These Entrepreneurs' Perceptions of Themselves in Society**

For the most part, the participants in this study recognized the uniqueness of who they were as compared to others. For some it was not the fact that they ran large empires and others did not, instead they understood that there was something different about the way they (and others like them) thought, as well as how they interacted with, adapted to, and influenced society.

The findings suggest that there were consistencies in the following:

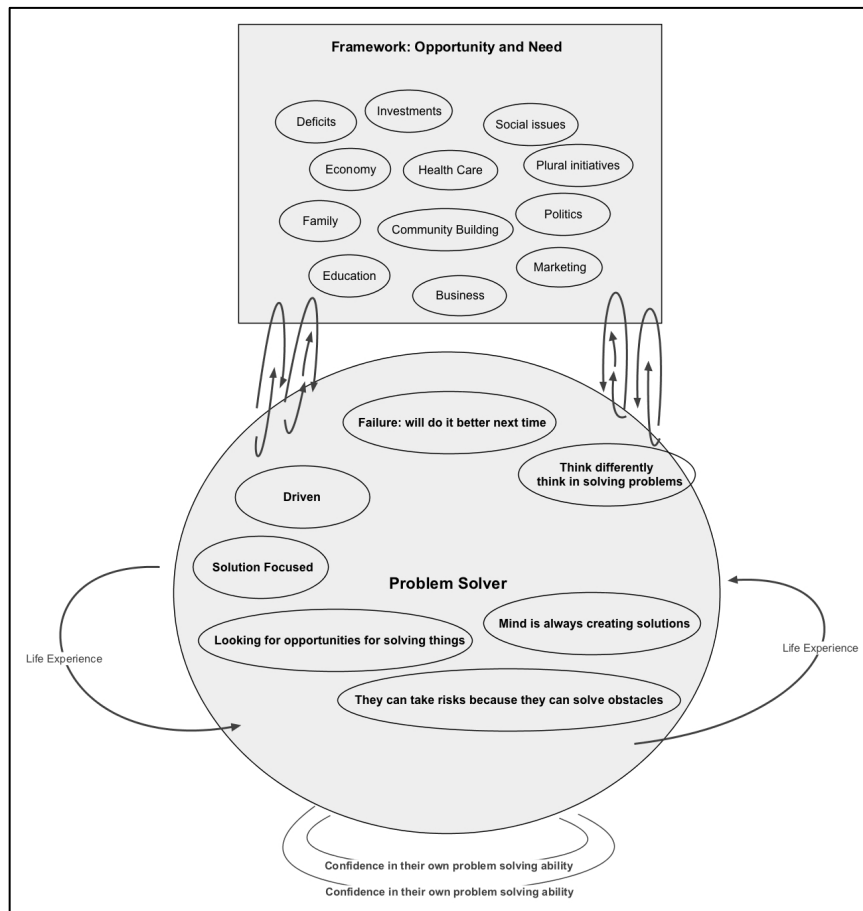
- They believed that they could see things coming before others. Consequently, they were less apprehensive about making decisions or taking risks. Most recognized that they could quickly find solutions to problems as, or before, they occurred because they were always working in possibilities in the future. For this group, being an entrepreneurial thinker was part of who they were and they could not turn it off.
- The problem solving never stopped. Each of the participants found that he or she had to strategically engage in something that would require deep thought, in order to get a reprieve from seeing opportunities and seeing ways to solve problems and relax their mind. Some believed they had A.D.D. Most of the participants expressed difficulty in being able to enjoy a vacation. Each recognized the challenges that this placed on those closest to them (both business and personal)

and on themselves as well. It was almost impossible to rest because it literally consumed them.

- They were driven to ownership, driven to succeed, and driven to respond to opportunities to make a difference in society. For some, ownership meant that they could have the control of the decision-making. There was a consensus that these participants did not like to have to wait for others who needed time to make decisions.
- Consciously, or unconsciously, the participants all recognized opportunity and need. They saw and responded to opportunity no matter where they were. Whether they were sitting at a stoplight, lying on the beach, or walking down the street, they could always see opportunities to do something better, or make something happen. They wished they could turn it off in an attempt to rest. When they dealt with colleagues or teams, it was a source of frustration when others could not see that opportunity.
- They did not see mistakes as failures but as opportunities. They planned on things happening, and when they did, like a chess game they would have two or three more moves already figured out. They firmly believed it is within the mistakes and challenges that the best learning experiences were found.
- They had no problems making decisions because they had a high degree of confidence in their own ability to see solutions. If something were to go badly, they could start again and work toward a new ownership opportunity. Many of these participants had already overcome those very obstacles in their lifetime.

- It was in the fact that there was risk that there was opportunity. They all believed that they were risk takers, and that they were not reckless or careless in their risk making. “Risk is like drugs to an addict,” one said (RG 16.00). They were okay with worst-case scenario because if it they could not live with the worst case, it would not even be something they would consider. These participants were able to take more risks because they could see solutions so easily. The confidence they had in their ability to see solutions reflected in their level of risk.
- They did not consider failures as failures, but as opportunities. Most had a difficult time thinking of failures. They told of losing almost everything and having to start again but did not consider that a failure, but growth or opportunity. They learned from the mistakes they made and rarely repeated that mistake.

The following figure is a visual framework and summary of how the entrepreneurs in this study saw themselves in society.



**Figure 5.2.** The problem-solving for these entrepreneurial thinkers.

The above figure is an aggregate visual representation of the perceptions of the participants. Beginning at the bottom, the foundation of their ability rested firmly on the confidence that they had in their own problem solving abilities. Life experience kept them alert and focused. They were constantly interacting with opportunity and need, depending on a particular moment where there might be a greater focus in one sector over another.

These entrepreneurial participants impacted and interacted with society in more ways than through a single venture in the private sector. Their tenacity for problem solving and opportunity recognition was also evidenced in their involvements in public and plural sectors.



#### **Key Finding 4: How Might We Develop and Make Space for the Entrepreneurial Mind?**

This study first emerged from a desire to have a better understanding of a particular entrepreneur; one who had impacted our society not only through the private enterprise, but also in public and plural sectors. Attention has been given to seek out new ways to identify and nurture entrepreneurs. This study has potential to add to what we know about a particular kind of entrepreneur, and what we know about how they think. There was also a divide in our definitions and understanding. This research has provided an opportunity to look closely at a phenomenon as experienced by a number of entrepreneurs. Through their stories and perceptions, there has been opportunity to bring to light, and identify, and recognize aspects of an entrepreneur that may be associated with an entrepreneurial thinker.

In this last section, I will revisit and highlight some of the insights and key learnings that have emerged from the stories of these entrepreneurial thinkers. I will to bring forward the possibility that based on our current understandings of the entrepreneur, that there could be a chance we may still be failing to recognize at least one particular kind of entrepreneurial thinker in the current, and possibly the next generation.

**Research question 3: from entrepreneur perceptions and stories, what insights could be garnered with respect to being, thinking and acting entrepreneurial; and what could be learned about creating educational conditions for entrepreneurship and its development?**

In this interpretivist qualitative study, I have attempted to “understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants” (Cohen et al., 2007,

p. 19). Social reality in this case is the life stories of a specific group of entrepreneurs as identified above. Understanding, according to Ernest, (1994) emerges from participant's subjective perceptions of their life world (e.g., von Eckartsberg, 1986) are distinctive (e.g., Van de Ven, 1993; Venkataraman, 1997) and is interpretable (e.g., Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Polkinghorne, 2007) by a researcher who immerses (e.g., Riessman & Speedy, 2007) him or herself in the stories. In this way, the researcher can gain a greater understanding of the reality of the phenomenon for these participants. While it is not generalizable to everyone (Johnson & Waterfield, 2004), there are interpretations and meaning that can draw us to a better understanding of a particular group of people and perceptions of their environment.

From the perceptions and stories of these entrepreneurial thinkers, at least three themes resonate with me with respect to thinking entrepreneurially, creating conditions for nurturing and development, and making a place for entrepreneurial thinkers in our education and plural sectors. They will be discussed as follows: Recognizing a kind of problem solving that was unique; Creating conditions for nurturing and development; and, Creating a place for entrepreneurial thinkers. I will begin with my observations regarding recognizing the uniqueness of these participants' ability to problem-solve.

### **Recognizing a kind of problem solving that was unique.**

The findings provide connections to the notion that there are many types of entrepreneurs. For example the literature suggested that there are Social Entrepreneurs (e.g., Swanson & Zhang, 2010; Scarborough, Wilson and Zimmer, 2009); Educational Entrepreneurs (e.g., Childress, 2010; Chubb, 2009); and Intrapreneurs (e.g., Carrier, 1996), to name a few. This study proposed that within the framework of entrepreneurs,

this group of participants typify what I would refer to as entrepreneurial thinkers. They are first, and foremost, problem solvers. I argue that this particular kind of entrepreneur could possibly exist within the parameter of all of the above entrepreneurs, but it does not mean that every one, or even any, in each of these parameters are entrepreneurial thinkers.

There are many reasons why a person may start a new business or venture. It could be in response to a given career, such as a pharmacist having his or her own pharmacy, or an automotive technician opening a shop out of his or her own garage. It could also be in response to need, such as a stay at home parent opening a business as a way to supplement their family earnings while he or she cares for their children. But the entrepreneurs in these cases are not necessarily representative of the problem-solvers in this study (even though they could be), nor would they necessarily possess the problem solving drive that seems to exist in the mind of the study's entrepreneurial thinkers (although they could).

The findings provide what I considered to be a uniqueness associated with the entrepreneurial participants in this study: an ability to see solutions to problems. This ability could be likened to the studies on instinct and intuition. Even as early as 1965, Knight argued that entrepreneurs had an instinct for risk-taking. Most recently, Gloria-Palermo (2001) identified entrepreneurial intuition as being a "novel intuition about future developments"(p. 25). Mitchell, et al. (2005) referred to intuition as something that guides the way entrepreneurs act: most specifically as it relates to risk.

The entrepreneurs in this study had more than intuition, they could see solutions for problems in every part of their normal day. Some described this as having a mind that they could not stop. One told what it was like to sit at a red light and see one thing after

another that could be fixed or done better. Another recalled how every day, when he walked with his wife, he could not stop thinking about solutions and opportunities in everything he saw throughout the walk. This was a piece of his thinking process: "...I could dig into that hill...change the name... change those trucks to solve the garbage problem...the wheels never stop" (AM 1: 26.00). One called this "quickness to solutions" (CB 25.00) her biggest struggle. She recalled thinking that people were just "choosing not to think of solutions as fast" until she realized one day that they really did not see what she did (CB 15.00). There were so many examples from each story. This feeling was unique among them but not as common in the literature surrounding entrepreneurs. One participant likened it to predicating the moves in a chess game. They could just see solutions two or three steps ahead of when they would need them. If they ran into a problem, they more often had two or three solutions for that problem long before it had even been a possibility. They agreed that making decisions, in any venture, was easier due to their confidence in their own ability to problem solve. They knew the limits of their ability to solve certain problems, so they were comfortable making decisions that others might feel were risks. In this way, they could be considered risk makers in that they knew how to "manage risk" (CB 19.00). These entrepreneurial participants recognized a propensity for problem solving, early in their life. They perceived that it affected their success in school.

### **Creating conditions for nurturing and development.**

All participants expressed the need for a way to better nurture and encourage their development. They related to problem solving that mirrored real life experiences. Seven of the nine participants felt that learning from a book was problematic and more often

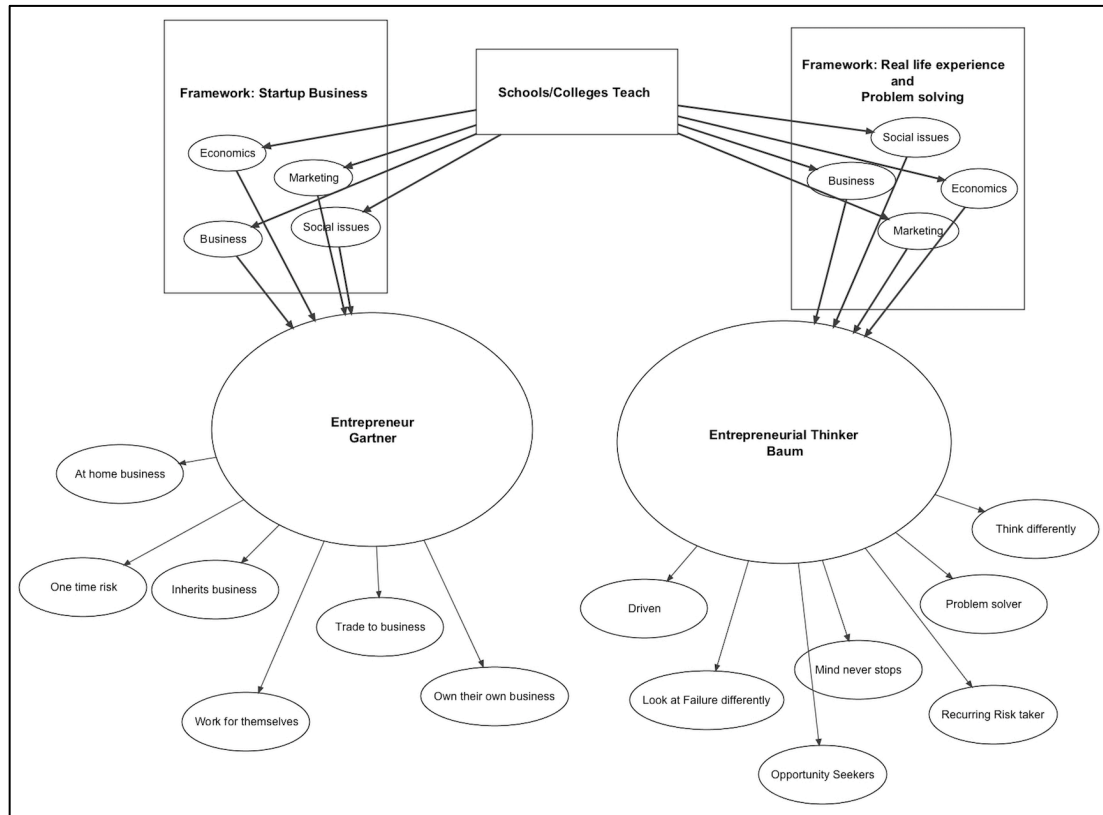
lacked a practical use. Eight out of nine participants expressed the concern that teachers did not recognize why they were disengaged and bored. More often the frustration of these participants was translated into an attitude that was punished by parents and teachers.

None of the participants saw exams as having value. A disconnect appeared to exist between what they could do in labs or in practical examples, and what was reflected on the exam. This resulted in a great deal of frustration for each one interviewed. Some memorized the required information the night before, in order to pass the exam, but found it irrelevant to the degree by which they needed to engage in the class itself. Others did what they could to avoid exams. Some worked very hard to opt out of exams, while others refused to write them. Those who stayed in school did so either because of their need for socializing, their love of extracurricular activities, or because they believed they needed to graduate in order to do what they wanted to do. Almost all of the participants expressed the sentiment that they were extremely bored in school. They felt that teachers tried to slow down their thinking to the point of boredom and revolt. No one felt that teachers recognized that thinking differently was okay, and consequently discouraged innovative thinking as make-work projects in an already busy job. Some participants could remember teachers and classes where they were engaged in problem solving that they perceived as applicable to life.

These entrepreneurial thinkers also felt that teachers perceived their future success based on marks. Some told of teachers who actually expressed surprise at their future success, based on their school marks and participation. They also expressed concern that High School marks were the determinate of a child's future opportunity to attend post

secondary training and much desired business courses. Eight out of nine participants felt like the way they were taught and/or the need to write exams did not motivate them to do better.

The following figure (Figure 5.3.) shows how these entrepreneurs felt they could learn. The participants in this study thought entrepreneurially. Their differences were not just evident in the fact that they created an organization (Gartner, 1989), or a new venture (Low & MacMillan, 1988); they were unique in that they saw solutions and possibilities in everything around them. They perceived that they never had to be taught how to solve problems. Instead they were drawn to it. Therefore, I have begun to think about the benefit for colleges and universities if they too were to teach entrepreneurial thinkers, like these participants, through real life, problem-solving activities. And although the application of this goes beyond what they said, as an interpretivist researcher, if I were asked to project what a college program might look like for these entrepreneurs, I might describe it in the following way.



**Figure 5.3.** Educating the entrepreneurial thinker.

### **Creating places for entrepreneurial thinkers.**

One of the key insights I garnered from this study was the need for a greater awareness of how others and myself can engage entrepreneurial thinkers who might be like the ones in this study. The entrepreneur participants recalled educational systems that misunderstood their need to explore possibilities and learn through doing. The perception of every one of these participants was that schools have the power to affect one's future in positive and negative ways. Most agreed that there were things about school that they loved (e.g., sports, social aspects, problem solving courses). But they also felt that it was unfair that a school could evaluate one's personal and future success based on an inability to qualify for a post-secondary opportunity, or on exams that, in the perception of these

participants, are not necessarily an accurate reflection of the actual learning that has taken place in each student. Exams also punish different answers as mistakes, and take little consideration of alternating ways to solve the problems (Robinson, 2001).

Two common elements unfolded through their stories: 1. Their entrepreneurial journeys were intricate, individually unique and complex, and, 2. Participants appeared to possess a drive that they described as a distinct and natural ability to problem-solve. These entrepreneurial participants could see solutions—not just for problems at hand, but for problems that may occur farther into the process. The participants were also confident in their own ability to solve problems and their own limitations. For this reason they believed that they would not enter into something where they could not live with the worst-case scenario.

**Summary of Key Finding 4: How I’ve come to better understand that we might develop and create awareness for the entrepreneurial mind?**

I have gained insight from the participants in this study with regard to how we might further develop and create awareness for entrepreneurs who think as they do. It was evident that there were similarities in the school experience of these participants. For example, they learned best when they were able to solve real world problems and they shared a dislike for exams. I questioned how it is possible to create awareness for these types of entrepreneurial minds as we encourage, develop and nurture them in schools, colleges and universities programs?

The participants in this study had an unstoppable propensity for problem solving. Simply stated, they related that they learned best through problem solving real life experiences. They felt restricted by having to slow down to stay with structured



programing and curriculum, and they only felt that mistakes were mistakes as they refused to learn from that mistake in order to solve the next problem. Exams were disliked to the place that one quit school over his unwillingness to write the test. Each one felt that exams were not a true representation of what they knew.

These entrepreneurs were used to moving fast and they needed to know that it was acceptable to do so (CB). They were self-sufficient; they made mistakes, and they may not have passed or finished school; but they figured out a way to survive and flourish. For these individuals, they all had a great deal of financial, social and community equity in spite of how they were taught, whether or not they had mentors or recognizable influences in their life, and in spite of how many times they did not succeed. Still, each one believed that education might have served to broaden their frame of reference, provided possibilities for them to have seen even greater opportunities, and might possibly have lessened the number of mistakes they had made.

### **Implications for The Field of Education**

Since the age of industrialization and the success of its entrepreneurial counterpart (Schumpeter, 1961), the desire to replicate entrepreneurs is a focus of most universities and colleges (e.g., Fayolle, 2007). Economics survives on them (e.g., Cantillon, 1755), universities and colleges have mandates to try to replicate them (e.g., Fayolle, 2007), and researchers have tried to understand them (e.g., Baumol, 1968; Audretsch, 2002). Great strides have been made in our attempt to understand influences (Sarasvathy, 2008), define the term (Gartner, 1989; Stevenson, 1983), understand its inception (Murphy, et al., 2006) and figure out how it could be nurtured and replicated (e.g., Fayolle). Through it all, the acceptance or rejection of the role of the entrepreneur him or herself is still often

balanced precariously between supporters of enterprise and those of education (e.g., Hentschke, 2009). Governments have recognized the innovative advantages to the economy, but some would argue that there is little progress toward educating entrepreneurs outside of post-secondary institutions (e.g., Leisey & Lavaroni, 2000). Even more slowly is the realization that educational leaders can be entrepreneurs and school change makers (Chubb, 2006). These findings suggest that there are consistencies by which these successful entrepreneurs engage in learning, most specifically through problem solving real-life examples.

Here I present what I have found to be implications for education. I do so with a sense or guess that these participants might represent a larger population than those I could interview, but with declared recognition that this study was not intended to be generalizable. It is also included with the hope that the insights from the rich data can initiate fruitful conversations on potential alignments between entrepreneurship and formal educational systems. My observations from the stories told, lead me to the following summary of participant insights regarding their educational experience and their thoughts on how that might be improved.

### **Accommodating Problem Solving**

Problem solving, according to these participants, was foundational for what they would use for the rest of their life. It was also evident that their perceived value in learning was their ability to flush out solutions rather than memorizing material. It was also apparent that, for these participants, school expectations and curriculum guidelines restricted their feeling of success rather than accommodated different types of learners. Lessons that eliminated opportunities for students to problem solve, or engage in real life

learning, left these learners feeling bored and unengaged. Most of these participants left school believing that they were not academically inclined yet their future successes would prove otherwise.

In most cases, completion of school was directly related to the degree to which they felt they needed to finish in order to go on with their career. In many cases, the results of their school experience directly affected college or university chances, and more often eliminated opportunities for these entrepreneurial thinkers to get formal training and experience that would have helped them in their businesses. In this way, participants felt like schools restricted and missed the opportunity to inspire them as young learners as to the value of post-secondary education. There was a unified belief that educational success existed primarily in its ability to prepare them for the real world.

On the other hand, it was interesting to note that their level of education made little difference in their ability to be successful, accumulate wealth, or positively impact the community around them. Some of the participants dropped out of high school. Others finished college or university. They all found a way to learn what they needed to know. However, there was a consensus that they would have found value in being able to study relevant topics such as: reading the market, accounting practices, marketing their ideas, and anything related to being organizationally savvy leaders. They believed that they would have made fewer mistakes if they had had better tools when they left school. They might have even sold a few more “widgets,” as was described by one participant (CB 49.00). It also would have helped them avoid some of the hardships of trial and error that they all had to learn on their own. They believed that education should have, as mentioned before, “widened the river rather than slowing it down” (CB 54.00).

### **Concluding Remarks with Respect to Implications for Education**

The entrepreneurs in this study were successful whether or not they had a positive school experience, whether they finished school or not, and whether or not they went to college or university. Each one of them believed if they went bankrupt, they would start again and work their way back to where they were and beyond. Anthony (2002) argued that if all the world's wealth were divided equally, it would only be a short time until the same ones would be wealthy, and the same ones would be poor again.

However one becomes an entrepreneurial thinker, members of this participant group agreed that there is a need for schools and post secondary institutions to equip and challenge young people like themselves to be better business owners and market savvy leaders. They argued that recognizing abilities earlier, could be an asset, not only to being able to encourage them in their talents and passions, but could give opportunity for their mistakes to occur in a classroom instead of in their businesses. Through the conversations I had with these participants, I realized that in many ways, these participants were like elite athletes.

Elite athletes also have recognizable skills that people believe emerge early in their life. They are only a few of them in our schools. Because of that, they have coaches and scouts watching for them. Once they are identified, teachers and coaches take special interest in them; they expose them to the best programs and encourage them to develop their skills. It is believed that a true natural athlete has a sense or an intuition that cannot be taught. Through that intuition, the athlete is able to predict where the ball is coming from and going to; where the play is going; and where the opposition will move. If they miss, they regroup and determine to watch more closely the next time.

In so many ways, I saw the same prowess in these entrepreneurial participants. The difference, remarkably, was that most often their earliest recognition of being different was negative. Many felt like they had an attention deficit problem because their mind could not be settled. Most were bored in school and were seldom encouraged for thinking differently at home and at school. This sense of not doing well in school was epitomized by one story of a teacher walking into his place of business and verbally expressing his surprise that he had made something of himself. Sadly, there were similar stories.

Although reality is subjective, what these participants remembered about school was consistent in all age groups, and in the different provinces they lived. Our schools are successful on so many levels. Unfortunately for this group of entrepreneurs, it was something to dread, quit, or do what needed to be done to get through.

**Implications for leadership: Encouraging entrepreneurial thinkers in public and plural sector leadership and boards**

These participants recognized problem solving as instinctual. For this reason, alone, their presence on public and plural sector boards would be invaluable. Given the data, here is what I have learned about why more entrepreneurial thinkers are not serving on our public and plural boards. The role of boards, in private, public and plural settings, is to be “accountable that its organization works” (Carver & Carver, 2001, p. 2). It appeared to me that engaging people who can see multiple solutions for any problem, who can solve problems two or three steps ahead of the problem, and who can be confident in their own ability to make decisions based on their natural problem solving abilities, would be a wise choice for any Board, or leadership team. Early in Cathy’s

career, she could remember being shocked that people could not see solutions that seemed so obvious to her. They really did not see, she realized. It was then that she recognized her value on these teams.

On the other hand, participants voiced frustration when other board members could not see the same solution or did not feel confident that the problems could be solved. They believed that others felt like they were showing off, or believed they had a personal agenda because they were able to quickly vocalize solutions and often appeared to do so in a matter-of-fact way. The participants were most often caught between knowing the answers, and keeping quiet so others around the table would not be threatened. One suggested that after years of frustration, she learned to survive boards and committees by devising ways to ask the right questions that would ultimately help others to recognize the solutions that she could so easily see. In this way other board members were able to feel like they had come up with the solution and thought her to be less of a threat.

Entrepreneurial participants also struggled with slow processes of decision making on boards. One participant stated, “the more we expand, the more we see, the more we can do. But it doesn’t take much to inspire us, our light bulbs go off pretty fast” (CB 30.00-31.00). Shapero and Sokol (1982) referred to those light bulb moments as a disruption in what is normal that forces a person to seek out new ideas. Many boards are not accustomed to making quick decisions especially if it includes an element of risk or breaking new ground. These entrepreneurs also struggled with fellow board members who slowed down the actions by postponing the decision-making. This inability to make fast decisions is what Rick called “paralysis by analysis” (RG 40.00). The participants in

this study were able to recognize solutions and felt confident in acting on them immediately. For this reason, leadership roles on boards and committees were important though they had a hard time functioning in situations where they did not have the authority to make changes. This also appeared to be one of the reasons they started their own businesses, foundations, boards and community aid programs. There was a certain freedom in knowing that they could make real the ideas and solutions without having to wait on others to give their approval.

### **Contribution to Literature and Methodology**

I chose an inductive approach to this study from an interpretivist research perspective, in order to analyze the participant stories, negotiate meaning, and construct reality based on the association of meaning with events and actions (Bryman, 2001) as told through stories (Andrews, Squire & Tambokou, 2008). In doing so, I was able to develop a framework of experiences from those stories and establish clear links between the research questions and the data (Bryman & Burgess, 1994). I drew from various expressions of narrative and phenomenological approaches with the intent that I might gain insights into the phenomenon that is the mind or thinking of an entrepreneur, detect a piece of their life meaning, and, in doing so recognize a sense of how they understand those events (Crossley, 2000; McAdams, 1993; Hanninen, 2004) (see also Chapter 2).

My participants were outliers who, through their practice, have naturally expanded their reach beyond the confines of common understandings. I now realize that this choice even challenged my own notions, and in this way, the study had the potential to confront existing assumptions and consequently make this research more relevant and meaningful (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011).

There is always the danger that when one approaches a study from a broader view, and a potentially smaller group, two possibilities might result. First, there may be a tendency to overcompensate for the non-generalizability of the collective themes and deem them less important than they might appear if one were to use a larger more traditional group. Second, using a narrative approach with an interpretive worldview could yield the possibility that nothing new would emerge. I was willing to take the risk in order to generate discussion around how we educate and view people who think entrepreneurially. I believe this study challenges some existing ideas and has opened the door for rich and valuable discussions as we look for meaningful ways to engage and educate entrepreneurial thinkers.

There were logistical challenges and rewards associated with this methodology. I chose people from across Canada, which increased the level of travel requirements and cost. But the gift was being able to speak with each person within his or her own surroundings. It provided a certain level of comfort and security for the participant that resulted in remembrances that were thorough and rich in detail. Go to the participant also fostered a collaborative between what was said, how it was said, and visual clues that I was able to observe while they were telling their story.

Allowing each participant to individually tell his or her story meant that there was an great amount of transcription that had to be done from interviews that lasted anywhere from one hour to 8 hours. Personally transcribing each word was time consuming, especially with electronic transcription programs that are set to recognize one voice and not the voices of 13 different people. I ended up repeating each interview into the dictate



program and then editing the final transcript by hand. Although this was time consuming, when I was done, I had been thoroughly immersed in the data.

I looked for common threads or elements across participants by physically cutting out participant statements from the transcript copies. This was time consuming, but valuable. I was committed to using participant quotes, versus my interpretation of what was said, in order to more accurately identify repetition in what was said and what the participants experienced. I physically sorted, moved, and reconsidered each sticky backed statement in order to match it to like-minded strips suspended on large walls. This took many days. I then discussed those choices, resorted some, and eliminated others with the second opinion of an additional researcher from outside of the study. This second look helped me to step back from the data and capture the details and life statements with a renewed confidence that I had accurately portrayed their intent.

The themes then became the key learnings for this study. Some themes reinforced what researchers had earlier established. Some of the themes that emerged have already stimulated discussions and have caused me to look more carefully at some commonly held assumptions. All have challenged my thinking as I reflect on my own teaching practice.

I believe this approach to the study of entrepreneurs was valuable especially as it has potential to unearth new ideations and insight that may not be imagined at the onset of the study. Since much of what we know about entrepreneurs originates in quantitative study, I believe this qualitative approach to be an innovative, worthy and valuable way of seeking out new ways of understanding a complex phenomenon like the entrepreneur.

## Summary of Findings and Contributions From This Study

The following chart summarizes findings and contributions that this study has made to the field and study of entrepreneurs. Each of the initial research questions from this study is identified. The first column indicates the Key Finding as indicated in Chapter 5 of the study. The second column identifies the theme as categorized through narrative interviews. The final column briefly explains the findings and contributions to knowledge on entrepreneurs as it relates to the participants of this study.

**Table 5.1.**

*Summary of Contributions To Knowledge (Question One)*

Key Finding	Thematic category	Findings and Contributions
Q1. How do these participant entrepreneurs perceive their personal development as entrepreneurs?		
#2	Role Models	Participants had no memory of direct influence on their entrepreneurial thinking from a grandparent, parent or mentor.
	Influence	Participants could not identify all of their siblings or all of their children as being able to think entrepreneurially.
	Environment	Participants could not identify anything in their environment that might have influenced them to think entrepreneurially.
	Education	Participants could not identify an educational situation where they learned to be entrepreneurial thinkers.

**Table 5.2.**

*Summary of Contributions To Knowledge (Question Two)*

Key Finding	Thematic category	Findings and Contributions
Q2. How do these participant entrepreneurs perceive themselves and how do they interact with, adapt to, and influence society?		
#3	Thought differently	Participants believed they thought differently than those around them—including family members.
	Mind never stopped	Their mind was always going though they tried to shut it off.
	Driven to think bigger	Participants' discontent was that they lived in what could be rather than what was.  Driven by a solutions approach to all aspects of their life.  Driven to ownership in order to be able to respond to opportunity and need without having to be held up by others.
	Recognized and responded to opportunity	They could not stop seeing opportunity in every part of their life.  Resonated with all areas of their life and community not just business opportunities.  Make sacrifices that many would not consider.
	Saw failures as learning tools	Something was not a failure just because it didn't work.  They were motivated to solve problems as they arose.  Failures were not considered failures. Instead they were ways to be wiser, sharper, more diligent and more mindful of their responsibilities.
(Continued)		

**Table 5.2.**

*Summary of Contributions To Knowledge (Question Two)(Continued)*

Key Finding	Thematic category	Findings and Contributions
Q2. How do these participant entrepreneurs perceive themselves and how do they interact with, adapt to, and influence society		
	Confident in their own problem-solving abilities	Naturally and confidently saw and acted on what could be based on an awareness of their own problem-solving capabilities.  Could see multiple solutions easily.  Managed the future, not the past.
	Risk makers	They made risk happen by being able to identify solutions easily. Their solutions would often be considered too risky to others.  They expressed a sense of accomplishment by doing what others had not.  They tended not to believe in luck.

**Table 5.3.***Summary of Contributions To Knowledge (Question Three)*

Key Finding	Thematic category	Findings and Contributions
		Q3. From these participant entrepreneurs' perceptions and stories, what insights could be garnered with respect to how they see themselves, how they think and act entrepreneurially; and what could be learned from those with an entrepreneurial mind that might have adaptive potential for those working within educational systems?
#4	Recognizing a kind of problem-solving that is unique	<p>Entrepreneurial Thinkers can possibly exist within the realm of Social Entrepreneurs, Educational Entrepreneurs, Intrapreneurs and Business Entrepreneurs, though it does not mean everyone in these parameters think entrepreneurially.</p> <p>Participants recognized and solved problems in every aspect of their life. They recognized a propensity for problem solving early in their life.</p>
	Creating conditions for nurturing and development	<p>These participants could not remember a time when they had learned to be problem-solvers. Instead, they recognized the frustration of being a problem solver.</p> <p>They were bored in school. They longed for learning that engaged them in problem-solving activities and real-life experience.</p> <p>They felt exams lacked real life application and were difficult or lacked relevance. School marks often limited future educational opportunities.</p>
	Creating places for entrepreneurial thinkers	<p>Their journeys were intricate, individually unique and complex.</p> <p>They had a distinctive drive and natural ability to problem-solve.</p> <p>They had financial, social and community equity in spite of their success, or lack of success in school.</p>

**Table 5.4.**

*Summary of Contributions to Theory and Methodology*

Key Finding	Thematic category	Findings and Contributions
Contribution to theory		
#1	Definition	These entrepreneurial thinkers can best be described as entrepreneurs who have an intuitive capacity to see new possibilities and create solutions.
Contribution to methodology		
	Qualitative	This study was an inductive approach to an interpretist research perspective and drew from expressions of narrative and phenomenology.

The key findings originate from a relatively small group of entrepreneurs (9), but they also resonated with the three entrepreneurs that I was unable to include. Since the compilation of this data, I have recognized similar beliefs and behaviors in children and adults through public, private and plural sectors that I have observed. For me, this awareness has moved me to look more closely at my own pedagogy and learner expectations as I teach. And for this, I am always grateful.

**Implications for Further Research**

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the minds (thinking) of selected entrepreneurs, who have had an influence in arenas that would be considered to be private, and plural sectors. Through this exploration of their lived experiences, deeper understandings of this phenomenon together with direct and indirect insights with potential implications for education systems would be garnered.

A rewarding result of this study would be that the findings serve to stimulate rich and valuable dialogue among business minds and educators. In addition, there would be value in knowing that this project might assist in the attempt to bridge a gap that often exists between business and education.

As much as was gleaned from this study, I was left with questions as to the nature of the entrepreneurial thinker him or herself. These questions could be taken to stimulate further research, or serve as themes that would direct conversations amongst those with interests in educating and understanding diverse groups of young entrepreneurs:

1. It would be interesting to examine the barriers that may prove bigger than ones' confidence to problem solve. Because this study looked at those who have successfully negotiated through setbacks and failures, how big would the setback have to be for them to not been able to get back up? It would be of interest to look at those who gave up and consider what lessons and strategies could be learned from those who negotiated through those barriers.
2. There would be value in conducting further research into the metacognitive processes of these entrepreneurial thinkers. At what point, if any, does the unconscious operation of problem solving first emerge? How do we identify that? How do we nurture those problem-solving capabilities?
3. How closely are personal self-efficacy and the entrepreneurial thinker's confidence in their own ability to problem-solve related? Is one a result of the other?
4. It would be interesting to create a longitudinal study of young children who appear to be drawn to problem solving activities and thinking. It would be

valuable to follow them through to adulthood to see how problem solving metacognitive processes transfer into their career and social involvement.

5. It would be valuable to look more deeply into how this different way of thinking manifests itself in the daily lives of entrepreneurial thinkers. Cathy spoke about the torment she experienced in her journey to understanding that she thought differently than others. How do individuals cope with the sense that he/she thinks differently? How closely does this unresolved sense of difference lead to depression, addictions and sickness?
6. How can a greater sense of acceptance can be encouraged and nurtured in the classroom and through an entrepreneurial thinker's life and what elements of classroom practice could best serve the needs of entrepreneurial thinkers.

### **Researcher's Concluding Remarks: Considering the Mind of an Entrepreneur**

The purpose of this study was to explore the minds (thinking) of selected entrepreneurs, who have had an influence in arenas that would be considered to be private, public and plural sectors. Through this exploration of their lived experiences, deeper understandings of this phenomenon together with direct and indirect insights with potential implications for education systems were garnered. The data were collected from the stories of nine, unique and remarkable entrepreneurs.

The problem at the start of the study was the gap in what we knew about the entrepreneurial mind made it hard for us to replicate, nurture, and understand entrepreneurial behaviour. This has implications on education, logically at a post secondary level, but also in earlier grades—especially if college entrance is limited by marks and completion.



I wanted to know more about the essence of the entrepreneurial mind in order to gain insight from their perceptions and experience, such that would stimulate conversations and explorations into further insights and discovery by looking at this specific kind of entrepreneur, their perceptions and the essence of they think. I asked participants about their perception of their personal development as entrepreneurs. There appeared to be little or no correlation between mentors and their ability to think entrepreneurially.

I wanted to know how do these participant entrepreneurs perceived themselves, and how they interacted with, adapted to, and influenced society? In addition to what was earlier mentioned, I recognized a sense of frustration as they worked to understand why everyone did not see the things they did; why others did not have the same drive as they did, and the difficulty this mindset had on relationships and their ability to rest. At the same time, I came away with a profound sense of the unselfishness that became part of who these entrepreneurs were, as they began to use their problem solving skills to benefit the greater good.

I wanted to know what could be learned from their stories with respect to being, thinking and acting entrepreneurial; and what could be learned about creating educational conditions for entrepreneurship and its development? The most interesting discovery for me was how this diverse group could be so similar. Participants came from various backgrounds (some were raised by grandparents, some went to boarding schools, some did not finish school, some graduated from top universities) yet their stories of school, of understanding themselves and about understanding their ability to problem solve, was so very similar. They had an ability to see solutions for problems for things like: better

traffic flow, what they could do with an idle vehicle, and for things in and around them that many would never notice. Most of the participants experienced a sense of struggle identifying who they were, accepting their differences, and accepting the consequences of their sense of continual problem solving (e.g., relationships that suffered, addictions, difficulty turning it off...). No matter how they articulated it, each person was the result of a life of self-learning—bearing the bruises and scars of mistakes which made me keenly aware of the battles they had overcome to be where they were.

The theme that recurred through the whole study was their ability to recognize opportunity as a result of their constant eye for solving problems. This affected school success, as they learned naturally through problem solving and struggled when memorizing for exams appeared to have little real world application. Labs and cases were incredible learning opportunities. No matter their age, these participants, could remember a particular teacher, the subject, and even the topic itself, where they could be engaged in a problem solving activity. Through their stories and perceptions, a type of entrepreneur emerged, bearing a distinctiveness that feeds a desire for further discovery.

## References

- Acs, Z. J., & Audretsch, D. B. (2005). *Handbook of entrepreneurship research: An interdisciplinary survey and introduction*. New York, NY: Springer Science & Business Media, Inc.
- Acs, Z. J. (2005). *Entrepreneurship (what's the big deal) and the macroeconomy in the 21st century*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/24/29/35579799.ppt>
- Acs, Z. J., & Audretsch, D. B. (2005), Entrepreneurship, innovation and technological change. *Foundations and Trends in Entrepreneurship*, 1(4), 149-195.
- Ajzen, I. (2002). Perceived behavioral control, self-efficacy, locus of control, and the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 32, 665-683.
- Aldrich, H., Rosen B., & Woodward, W. (1987). The impact of social networks on business foundings and profit: A longitudinal study. In N. Churchill, J. Hornaday, B. Kirchhoff, O. Krasner, & K. Vesper (Eds.), *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research* (pp. 154-168). Babson College, Babson Park, MA.
- Alvesson, M. (2002). *Understanding organizational culture*. London. Thousand Oaks. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Alvesson, M., & Sandberg, J. (2011). Generating research questions through problemization. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(2), 247-271.
- Andrews, M., Squire, C., & Tambokou, M. (Eds.). (2008). *Doing narrative research*. London: Sage.
- Anthony, R. (2002). *Advanced formula for total success*. Brisbane, AS: Mass Market Paperback.
- Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., & Delamont S. (2003). *Key themes in qualitative research:*

*Continuities and change*. AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

Autio, E. (2005). Report on high-expectancy entrepreneurship. *Global entrepreneurship monitor report*, Babson College and London Business School.

Audretsch, D. B. (1995). *Innovation and industry evolution*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press,

Audretsch, D. B. (2002). Entrepreneurship: A survey of the literature. Brussels: European Commission Working Paper, Enterprise Directorate General.

Audretsch, D. B. (2006). *Entrepreneurship, innovation and economic growth*. Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 2JA UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Austin, J., Stevenson, H., & Wei-Skillern, J. (2006). Social and commercial entrepreneurship: Same, different, or both? *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 30(1) 1-22. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6520.2006.00107.x.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1986). *The social foundations of thought and action*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bates, T. (1995). Self-employment entry across industry groups. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 12, 109-124.

Baron, R. A. (2008). The role of affect in the entrepreneurial process. *Academy of Management Review*, 33(2), 328-340.

Barth, R. (2002). Making happen what you believe in. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82(2), 446.

Baum, C.G. (2013, May, 22). Rotary Youth Talent Festival a gem in our community. Cochrane Times. Retrieved from <http://www.cochraneagle.com/article/20130522/COE0904/305229983/rotary-youth-talent-festival-a-gem-in-our-community>

- Baum, J.R., Locke, E., & Smith, K. (2001). A multidimensional model of venture growth. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44(2), 292- 303.
- Baumol, W. J. (1968). Entrepreneurship in economic theory. *The American Economic Review*, 58(2), 64-71.
- Baumol, W. J. (1990). Entrepreneurship: Productive, unproductive, and destructive. *Journal of Political Economy*, 98, 893–921.
- Beal, D. J., Weiss, H. M., Barros, E., & MacDermid, S. (2005). An episodic process model of affective influences on performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(6), 1054-1068.
- Berg, S. (1981). On snowball sampling, random mappings and related problems. *Journal of Applied Probability*, 18(1), 283-290.
- Berglund, H. (2007). Researching entrepreneurship as lived experience. In H. Neergaard & J. P. Ulhoi (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Entrepreneurship* (pp. 75-95). Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing
- Best, J., & Kahn, J. (1993). *Research in education*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Betsworth, D., Bouchard, T., Cooper, C., Grotevant, H., Hansen, J., Scarr, S., & Weinberg, R. (1994). Genetic and environmental influences on vocational interests assessed using adoptive and biological families and twins reared together and apart. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 44, 263-278.
- Bird, B. (1989). *Entrepreneurial behavior*. London: Scott Foresman.
- Blankstein, A. M. (2010). *Failure is not an option: Six principles for making student success the only option* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin A Sage Company.
- Block, P. (1987). *The empowered manager: Political skills at work*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education*. Boston: Pearson Education Group, Inc.
- Boschee, J. (2008). Social entrepreneurship: The promise and the perils. In A. Nicholls (Ed.), *Social entrepreneurship: new models of sustainable social change* (pp. 356-390). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Botsaris, C. A., & Vamvaka, V. (2012). Models of the determinants of entrepreneurial behaviour: A literature review. *Regional Science Inquiry*, 4(3), 155-172.
- Boyd, N., & Vozikis, G. (1994). The influence of self-efficacy on the development of entrepreneurial intentions and actions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 18, 63- 77.
- Brandstätter, H. (1997). Becoming an entrepreneur: A question of personality structure? *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 18, 157-177.
- Bridge, S., & McGownan, P. (2007). Entrepreneurship education and other influences on the level of entrepreneurship in a population: Why people might chose entrepreneurship. Paper Presented at the International Council of Small Business (ICSB) World Conference, University of Economics, Turku, Finland, 12 -15 June.
- Brockhaus, R. (1982). The psychology of the entrepreneur. In C.A. Kent, D. I. Sexton, & K.H. Vesper (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Entrepreneurship* (pp. 39-56). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Brown, R. J., & Cornwall, J. R. (2000). *The entrepreneurial educator*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Bruyat, C., & Julien, P.A. (2001). Defining the field of research in entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 16(2), 165-180.

- Bryant, Y. (2012, November). What is entrepreneurial thinking? Retrieved from <http://www.entrepreneurialambitions.com/2012/03/07what-is-entrepreneurial-thinking/>
- Buchanan, J. M., & Vanberg, V. J. (1991). The market as a creative process. *Economics and Philosophy*, 7, 167-186.
- Bullock, J. B., & Klein, P. G. (2006). Can entrepreneurship be taught? *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics*, 38(2), 49-54.
- Busenitz, L. W., & Lau, C. M. (1996). A cross-cultural cognitive model of new venture creation. *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, 20(4), 25-32.
- Bygrave, W. D. (2007). The entrepreneurship paradigm revisited. In H. Neergaard & J. P. Ulhoi (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Entrepreneurship* (pp. 17-48). Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Caliendo, M., Fossen, F. M., & Kritikos, A. S. (2011). Personality characteristics and the decision to become and stay self-employed. *Small Business Economics*, 42(4), 787-814.
- Cantillon, R. (1959). *Essai Sur la Nature du Commerce en General* [Essay on the Nature of Trade in General]. In H. Higgs (Eds.), and trans. Library of Economics and Liberty. Retrieved from <http://www.econlib.org/library/NPDBooks/Cantillon/cntNT.html>
- Carillo, K. D. (2010). Social cognitive theory in IS research: Literature review, criticism, and research agenda. In *Information Systems, Technology and Management: Communications in Computer and Information Science* (Vol. 54, pp. 20-31). Berlin Heidelberg: Springer.
- Carrier, C. (1996). Intrapreneurship in small businesses: An exploratory study. *Entrepreneurship: Theory & Practice*, 21(1), 5-20.
- Carter, S. M., & Little, M. (2007). Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: Epistemologies, methodologies, and methods in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health*

*Research*. 17(10), 1316-1328. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. Retrieved from qhr.sagepub.com

Carver, J., & Carver, M. (2001). Carver's Policy Governance Model in Nonprofit Organizations. Retrieved from [www.curling.ca/w2/files/2014/05/Carvers-Policy-Governance-A-Model-in-Nonprofit-Organizations.pdf](http://www.curling.ca/w2/files/2014/05/Carvers-Policy-Governance-A-Model-in-Nonprofit-Organizations.pdf)

Casson, M. (2005). Entrepreneurship, business culture and the theory of the firm. In Z. J. Acs & D.B. Audretsch (Eds.), *Handbook of Entrepreneurship Research* (pp. 223-246). New York, NY: Springer.

Chandler, G., & Lyon, D. (2001). Issues of research design and construct measurement in entrepreneurship research: The past decade. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 25(4), 101-104.

Chandler, G., DeTienne, D. R., McKelvie, A., & Mumford, T. V. (2011). Causation and effectuation processes: A validation study. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 26(2), 375-390.

Charney, A. H., & Libecap, G. D. (2003). The contribution of entrepreneurship education: An analysis of the Berger Program. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 1(3), 385-418.

Chase, S. E. (2011). Narrative inquiry: Still a field in the making. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 421-434). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Chia, R. (1995). Modern to postmodern organizational analysis. *Organizational Studies*, 16(4), 579-604.

Childress, S. M. (2010). *Transforming public education: Cases in education entrepreneurship*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.



- Chrisman, J. J., Carsrud, A. L., DeCastro, J., & Herron, L. (1990). A comparison of assistance needs of male and female pre-venture entrepreneurs. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 5(3), 235-248.
- Churchill, N. C., & Lewis, V. (1986). Entrepreneurial research: Directions and methods. In D.L. Sexton & R.W. Smilor (Eds.), *The Art and Science of Entrepreneurship* (pp. 333-365). Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.
- Chubb, J. E. (2006). The bias against scale and profit. In F. M. Hess (Eds.), *Educational Entrepreneurship: Realities, Challenges, Possibilities* (pp. 203-222). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Chubb, J. E. (2008). *Learning from No Child Left Behind: How and why the nation's most important but controversial education law should be renewed*. Stanford University, US: Hoover Institution Press.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1998). Personal experience methods. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (pp. 72-84). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Eds.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry* (pp. 150-178). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cobuild Collins Dictionary* (4th ed.). (2003). Retrieved from <http://Dictionary.reverso.net>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. London: Routledge.
- Collins, J. (2005). *Good to great and the social sectors: Why business thinking is not the answer*. New York, NY: Harper Business.

- Collins, O. F., & Moore, D. G. (1970). *The organization makers*. New York: Appleton-Century Crofts.
- Companys, Y., & McMullen, J. (2006). Strategic entrepreneurs at work: The nature, discovery, and exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. *Small Business Economics*, 28, 301-322.
- Cooper, A., Woo, C., & Dunkelberg, W. (1988). Entrepreneurs' perceived chances for success. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 3(2), 97-108.
- Cooper, A., & Dunkelberg, W. (1981). A new look at business entry: Experiences of 1805 Entrepreneurs. In K. H. Vesper (Ed.). *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research. The Proceedings of the Babson conference on entrepreneurship research* (pp. 1-20). Wellesley, Mass.: Babson College.
- Cooper, A., Tamachandran, M., & Schoorman, D. (1997). Time allocation patterns of craftsmen and administrative entrepreneurs: Implications for financial performance. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 22(2), 123-136.
- Cope, J. (2005). Toward a dynamic learning perspective of entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 7, 373-95.
- Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Crossley, M. L. (2000). *Introducing narrative psychology: Self, trauma and the construction of meaning*. Open University Press: Buckingham. ISBN 0 335 20291 8

- Cuervo, A., Ribeiro, D., & Roig, S. (2007). *Entrepreneurship: Concepts, theory and perspective*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Cunningham, J. B., & Lischeron, J. (1991). Defining entrepreneurship. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 29(1), 45-61.
- Czarniawska, B. (2004). *Narratives in social science research*. Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage.
- Dacin, P. A., Dacin, M. T., & Matear, M. (2010). Social entrepreneurship: Why we don't need a new theory and how we move forward from here. *Academy of Management Perspective*, 24(3), 37-57.
- Davidsson, P. (2004). *Researching entrepreneurship*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Davies, B., & Hentschke, G. C. (2002). Changing resource and organizational patterns: The challenge of resourcing education in the 21st century. *Journal of Educational Change*, 3(2), 135-159.
- Davis, B. (2004). *Inventions of teaching: A genealogy*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Dees, J. G. (2001). *The meaning of social entrepreneurship*. Unpublished manuscript. Retrieved from [http://www.caseatduke.org/documents/dees\\_sedef.pdf](http://www.caseatduke.org/documents/dees_sedef.pdf)
- Dees, J. G., & Battle Anderson, B. (2006). Framing a theory of social entrepreneurship: Building on two schools of practice and thought. In R. Mosher-Williams (Ed.), *Research on social entrepreneurship: Understanding and contributing to an emerging field* (pp. 39–66). Washington, DC: Aspen Institute.
- Delbecq, A. L., Van de Ven, A. H., & Gustafson, D. H. (1975). *Group techniques for program planning: A guide to nominal group and Delphi processes*. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.
- Deleuze, G. (1994). *Difference and repetition*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2001). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln Y. S. (Eds.) (2002). *The qualitative inquiry reader*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln Y. S. (2003). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dewald, J. (2014, March 10). Three factors that foster entrepreneurial thinking. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/careers/leadership-lab/the-magic-of-entrepreneurial-thinking/article17411557/>
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Logic: The theory of inquiry*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Dickson, P. H., Solomon, G. T., & Weaver, K. M. (2008). Entrepreneurial selection and success: does education matter? *Journal of small business and enterprise development*, 15(2), 239-258.
- Dimopoulou, E. (2012). Self-efficacy and collective efficacy beliefs of teachers for children with Autism. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal*, 3, 509-520.
- Drucker, P. F. (1985). *Innovation and entrepreneurship*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Duening, T. N. (2010). Five minds for the entrepreneurial future: Cognitive skills as the intellectual foundation for next generation entrepreneurship curricula. *Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 19(1), 1-22.
- Ellison, B. S. (2009). *In Contradiction: The concept of globalization in the popular discourse of*

*education reform* (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from

[trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1077&content=utk\\_graddiss](http://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1077&content=utk_graddiss)

Eisner, R. (1997). Attitudes and beliefs. In A. Baum, S. Newman, J. Weinman, R. West and C. McManus (Eds.), *Cambridge handbook of psychology, health and medicine*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Eisenhardt, K. M., & Martin, J. A. (2000). Dynamic capabilities: What are they? *Strategic Management Journal*, 21, 1105-1121.

Evans, P. (1996). Introduction. Development strategies across the public-private divide. *World Development*, 24(6), (pp. 1-2).

Evans, D., & Leighton, I. (1989). Some empirical aspects of entrepreneurship. *American Economist Review*, 79, 519-535.

Fayolle, A. (2007). *Handbook of research in entrepreneurship education: A General Perspective*. Northampton Massachusetts, 01060 USA: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Finch, J. (1985). Social policy and education: Problems and possibilities of using qualitative research. In R. Burgess (Ed.), *Issues in Educational Research: Qualitative methods* (pp. 109-128). London: Falmer Press.

Fisher, E., & Reuber, R. (2010). The state of entrepreneurship in Canada. *Small Business and Tourism Branch Industry Canada*. Retrieved from [www.ic.gc.ca/sbresearch](http://www.ic.gc.ca/sbresearch)

Frank, C. (2014, November 18). Are you an entrepreneurial thinker: Genetics or just plain hard work? Retrieved from <http://carolfrank.com/are-you-an-entrepreneurial-thinker-genetics-or-just-plain-hard-work/>

Frantz, R. S. (2005). *Two minds: Intuition and analysis in the history of economic thought*. Spring Street, New York, NY 10013, USA: Springer Science & Business Media Inc.

- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Herter and Herter.
- Fullan, M. (1997). *What's worth fighting for in the principalship?* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Fullan, M. (2003). *The moral imperative of school leadership?* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc.
- Fullan, M. (2004). *Leading in a culture of change*. New York, NY 10001: Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M. (2010). *All systems go: The change imperative for whole system reform*. Thousand Oaks California: Corwin Press, SAGE Ltd.
- Gadamer, H. G. (1975). *Truth and method*. New York, NY: Seabury.
- Gatewood, E. J., Shaver, K. G., & Gartner, W. B. (1995). A longitudinal study of cognitive factors influencing start-up behaviors and success at venture creation. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 10(5), 371-391.
- Garten, J. E. (2001). *The Mind of the CEO*. New York, NY: Perseus Press.
- Gartner, W. B. (1988). Who is an entrepreneur? Is the wrong question. *American Journal of Small Business*, Spring, 11-32.
- Gartner, W. B. (1989). "Who is an entrepreneur?" Is it still the wrong question? *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 25(4), 41-56.
- Gartner, W. B., & Birley, S. (2002). Introduction to the special issue on qualitative methods in entrepreneurship research. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 17(5), 387-395.
- Gartner, W. B., & Baker, T. (2010). A plausible history and exploration of Stevenson's definition of entrepreneurship. *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research*, 30(4), 1-15. Retrieved from <http://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol30/iss4/2>
- Gasse, Y., & Tremblay, M. (2011). Entrepreneurial beliefs and intentions: A cross-cultural study

of university students in seven countries. *International Journal of Business*, 16(4), 303-315.

Gee, J. (2008). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.

Gibb, A. A. (1997). Small firms' training and competitiveness: Building on the small business as a learning organization. *International Small Business Journal*, 30(7), 13-29.

Gibb, A. A. (2002a). In pursuit of a new entrepreneurship paradigm for learning: Creative destruction, new values, new ways of doing things and new combinations of knowledge. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 4(3), 233-269.

Gibb, A. A. (2002b). Creating conducive environments for learning and entrepreneurship: Living with, dealing with, creating and enjoying uncertainty and complexity. *Industry and Higher Education*, 16(3), 135-148.

Gibb, A. A. (2007). Entrepreneurship: Unique solutions for unique environments. Is it possible to achieve this with the existing paradigm? *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 5, 93-142.

Gibb, A. A. (2009). Meeting the development needs of owner-managed small enterprise: A discussion of the centrality of action learning. *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, 6(3), 209-27.

Gibb, A. A. (2011). Concepts into practice: Meeting the challenge of development of entrepreneurship educators around an innovative paradigm. The case of the International Entrepreneurship Educators Programme (IEEP). *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 17(2), 146-165.

Gifford, S. (2005). Risk and uncertainty. In Z. J. Acs, & D. B., Audretsch (Eds.), *Handbook of*

*entrepreneurship research: An interdisciplinary survey and introduction* (pp. 37-54).

New York, NY: Springer.

Giorgi, A. P. (2012). The Descriptive Phenomenological Psychological Method. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 42(2), 195-216.

Gloria-Palermo, S. (2001). *Evolution of Austrian economics: From Menger to Lachmann*. Taylor & Francis e-library London: Routledge.

Gosling, J., & Mintzberg, H. (2003). The five minds of a manager. *Harvard Business Review*, 81(11), 54-63.

Gray, K. R., Foster, H., & Howard, M. (2006). Motivations of Moroccans to be entrepreneurs. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, 11, 297-318.

Grix, J. (2002). Introducing students to the generic terminology of social research. *Politics*, 22(3), 175-186.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1999). Naturalistic and rationalistic enquiry. In J. Keeves & G. Lakomski (Eds.), *Issues in educational research* (pp. 141-149). Oxford: Pergamum.

Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (1997). *The New Language of Qualitative Method*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Gupta, V., MacMillan, I. C., & Surie, G. (2004). Entrepreneurial leadership: developing and measuring a cross-cultural construct. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 19(3), 241-260.

Guzmán, J., & Javier Santos, F. (2001). The booster function and the entrepreneurial quality: an application to the province of Seville. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 13(3), 211-228.



- Hammersley, M. (2008). *Questioning qualitative inquiry: Critical essays*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hanninen, V. (2004). A model of narrative circulation. *Narrative Inquiry*, 14, 69-85.
- Hargreaves, A., & Shirley, D. (2010). *The fourth way: The inspiring future for educational change*. New York, NY: Corwin. ISBN: 9781412976374.
- Hayek, F. A. (1944). *The road to serfdom*. 711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA: Routledge.
- Hayek, F. A. (1945). The use of knowledge in society. *American Economic Review*, 35, 519-530.
- Hayek, F. A. (1948). *Individualism and economic order*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hebert, R. F., & Link, A. N. (1988). *The entrepreneur: Mainstream views and radical critiques*. New York: Praeger.
- Hebert, R., & Link, A. (1989). In search of the meaning of entrepreneurship. *Small Business Economics*, 1(1), 39-49.
- Herbert, R.F. & Link, A.N. (1982). *The entrepreneur*. New York, NY: Praeger Publishers.
- Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being and time*. New York NY: HarperOne.
- Hendry, P. M. (2010). Narrative as inquiry. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 103, 72-80.
- Hentschke, G. C. (2009). Entrepreneurial leadership. In B. Davies (Eds.), *The Essentials of School Leadership* (2nd ed., pp. 147-166). London: Sage Publications.
- Hess, F. M. (Ed.). (2006). *Educational entrepreneurship: Realities, challenges, possibilities*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

- Hilliard, A., & Jackson, B. T. (2011). Current trends in educational leadership for student success plus facilities planning and designing. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 4(1), 1-8.
- Hindle, K. (2004). Choosing qualitative methods for entrepreneurial cognition research: A canonical development approach. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 28(6), 575–607.
- Hisrich, R. D. (1990). Entrepreneurship/intrapreneurship. *The American Psychologist*, 45(1), 209-222.
- Homer-Dixon, T. F. (2000). *The Ingenuity Gap* (First Edition). New York, NY: Knopf.
- Hoselitz, B. (1951). The early history of entrepreneurial theory. *Explorations in Entrepreneurial History*, 3, 193-220.
- Howe, H. (2012, November 16). Juravinski and Rumpel back in the saddle again. *The Hamilton Spectator*. Retrieved from [www.thespec.com/sports-story/2243330-juranski-and-rumpel-back-in-the-saddle-again/](http://www.thespec.com/sports-story/2243330-juranski-and-rumpel-back-in-the-saddle-again/)
- Husserl, E. (1997). *Psychological and transcendental phenomenology and confrontation with Heidegger* (T. Sheehan & R. Palmer, Trans.). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.
- Hynes, B. (1996). Entrepreneurship education and training: Introducing entrepreneurship into non-business disciplines. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 20(8), 10-17.
- Immigration Canada (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2011-preliminary/index.asp>
- Ireland, R. D., Hitt, M., & Simon, D. G. (2003). A model of strategic entrepreneurship: The contrast and its dimensions. *Journal of Management*, 29(6), 963-982.

- Izquierdo, E., & Buelens, M. (2008, July). Competing models of entrepreneurial intentions: The influence of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and attitudes. Paper presented at the Internationalizing Entrepreneurship Education and Training IntEnt2008 Conference, Oxford, Ohio. Retrieved from [http://www.dspace.espol.edu.ec/bitstream/123456789/9125/1/competing\\_models\\_of\\_entrepreneurial\\_intentions.pdf](http://www.dspace.espol.edu.ec/bitstream/123456789/9125/1/competing_models_of_entrepreneurial_intentions.pdf)
- Jantunen, A., Puumalainen, K., Saarenketo, S., & Kylaheiko, K. (2005). Entrepreneurial orientation, dynamic capabilities and international performance. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 3, 223-243.
- Johannisson, B. (1998). Personal networks in emerging knowledge-based firms: Spatial and functional patterns. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 10(4), 297-312.
- Johnson, P. S., Parker, S. C., & Wijbenga, F. (2006). Nascent Entrepreneurship Research: Achievements and Opportunities, *Small Business Economics*, 27, 1-4.
- Johnson, R., & Waterfield, J. (2004). Making words count: The value of qualitative research. *Physiotherapy Research International*, 9, 121-131.
- Josselson, R. (2006). Narrative research and the challenge of accumulating knowledge. *Narrative Inquiry*, 16(1), 3-10.
- Josselson, R. (2007). The ethical attitude in narrative research: Principles and practicalities. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology* (pp. 537-566). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Katz, J.A. (1992). A psychosocial cognitive model of employment status choice. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 17(1), 29-38.
- Katz, J. (2003). The chronology and intellectual trajectory of American entrepreneurship

- education 1876-1999. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 18, 283-300.
- Keller, L., Bouchard, T., Arvey, R., Segal, N., & Dawes, R. (1992). Work values: Genetic and environmental influences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77(1), 79-88.
- Kent, C.A. (1990), Introduction. Educating the heffalump. In: C.A. Kent (Eds.), *Entrepreneurship Education: Current Developments, Future Directions* (pp. 1-26). New York, NY: Quorum books.
- Kim, M. S., & Hunter, J. E. (1993). Attitude-behavior relations: A meta-analysis of attitudinal relevance and topic. *Journal of Communication*, 43(1), 101-142.
- Kirbyson, (2011, June 1), Meet the patriarch of first family of hockey. *The Winnipeg Free Press*. Retrieved from <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/sports/hockey/meet-the-patriarch-of-first-family-of-hockey-122926943.html>
- Kirzner, I. M. (1973). *Competition and entrepreneurship*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Kirzner, I. M. (1979). *Perception, opportunity, and profit: Studies in the theory of entrepreneurship*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Kirzner, I. M. (1997). Entrepreneurial discovery and the competitive market process: An Austrian approach. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 35, 60-85.
- Klein, P. G., & Bullock, J. B. (2006). Can entrepreneurship be taught? *Journal of Agriculture and Applied Economics*, 35(10), 60-85.
- Knight, F. H. (1921). *Risk, uncertainty, and profit*. Library of Economics and Liberty. Retrieved from <http://www.econlib.org/library/Knight/knRUP.html>
- Knight, F. H. (1931). Davenport, Herbert Joseph. *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 5, 8-9.
- Knight, F. H. (2005). Risk, uncertainty, and profit. Retrieved from

<http://www.econlib.org/library/Knight/knRUP.html>

- Koppl, R., & Minniti, M. (2005). Market processes and entrepreneurial studies. In Z. J. Acs and D. B. Audretsch (Eds.), *Handbook of entrepreneurial research* (pp. 81- 104). Boston: Kluwer.
- Kollmann, T., & Kuckertz, A. (2006). Venture archetypes and the entrepreneurial event: Cross-cultural empirical evidence. *Journal of Enterprising Culture*, 14, 27-48.
- Koolman, G. (1971). Say's conception of the role of the entrepreneur. *Economica*, 35(4), 269-286.
- Kourilsky, M. L., & Hentschke, G. (2003). Educational entrepreneurship and covisionary multisectorism. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Education: Social Entrepreneurship*, 2, 115-140.
- Krueger, N. F., & Brazeal, D. (1994) Entrepreneurial potential & potential entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, 18, 91-104.
- Krueger, N. F. Jr. (1993). The impact of prior entrepreneurial exposure on perceptions and new venture feasibility and desirability. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 18, 5- 21.
- Krueger, N. F. Jr., & Carsrud, A. (1993). Entrepreneurial intentions: Applying the theory of planned behaviour. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 5, 315-330.
- Krueger, N. F. Jr., Reilly, M. D., & Carsrud, A. L. (2000). Competing models of entrepreneurial intentions. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 15, 411- 432.
- Kruger, N. F. (2007). What lies beneath: The experiential essence of entrepreneurial thinking. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 31(1), 123-142.
- Kuratko, D. K. (2003). *Entrepreneurship education: Emerging trends and challenges for the 21st century*. Chicago, IL: Coleman Foundation White Paper Series, The Coleman

Foundation.

Kuratko, D. K. (2009). *Entrepreneurship theory/ process/ practice* (8th ed.). United Kingdom:

Thomas South-Western CENGAGE Learning.

Landstrom, H. (1999). The roots of entrepreneurship research. *New England Journal of*

*Entrepreneurship*, 2(2), 9-20.

Landstrom, H. (2010). *Pioneers in entrepreneurship and small business research*.

New York, NY: Singer.

Landstrom, H., & Lohrke, F. (2010). *Historical foundations of entrepreneurship research*.

Cheltenham Glos. UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Leibenstein, H. (1968). Entrepreneurship and development. *The American Economic*

*Review*, 58(2), 72-83.

Leisey, D. E., & Lavaroni, C. (2000). *The educational entrepreneur: Making a difference*.

Cambridge, UK: Edupreneur Press.

Leithwood, K. A., & Menzies, T. (1998). Forms and effects of school-based management: A

review. *Educational Policy*, 12(3), 325-346.

Leithwood, K. A., Harris, A., & Strauss, T. (2010). *Leading school turnaround*. San Francisco,

CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lewin, K. (1951). *Field theory in social science*. New York: Harper Row.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE.

Long, W. (1983). The meaning of entrepreneurship. *American Journal of Small Business*, 8(2),

47-59.

Lohrke, F. T., & Landström, H. (2012). Examining the intellectual roots of entrepreneurship

research. In H. Landström & F. T. Lohrke (Eds.), *Intellectual Roots of Entrepreneurship*

*Research* (pp. 46-76). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishers.

Low, M. B., & MacMillan, I. C. (1988). Entrepreneurship: Past research and future challenges. *Journal of Management*, 14(2), 139-161.

Lucas, R. E. (1978). On the size distribution of business firms. *Bell Journal of Economics*, 9(2), 508-523.

Lumpkin, G. T., & Dess, G.G. (1996). Clarifying the entrepreneurial orientation construct and linking it to performance. *The Academy of Management Review*, 21(1), 135-172.

Lüthje, C., & Fanke, N. (2003). The ‘making’ of an entrepreneur: Testing a model of entrepreneurial intent among engineering students at MIT. *R&D Management*, 33, 135-147. Retrieved from [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111.1467-9310.00288/epdf](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111.1467-9310.00288/epdf)

Marvel, R., Griffin, A., Hebda, J., & Vojak, B. (2007). Examining the technical corporate entrepreneurs’ motivation: voices from the field. *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, 31(5), 753-768.

Marshall, A. (1920). *Principles of economics* (8th ed.). London: Macmillan. Retrieved from [www.econlib.org/library/Marshall/marP.html](http://www.econlib.org/library/Marshall/marP.html)

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (2006). *Designing qualitative research*, 4th ed. London: SAGE Publications.

Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*, 13(6), 522-525.

Matlay, H. (2005). Entrepreneurship education in UK business schools: Conceptual, contextual and policy considerations. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 12(4), 627- 643

Matlay, H. (2008). The impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial outcomes. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 15(2), 382-396.

- Menger, C. (1871). *Principles of economics*. Retrieved from <http://mises.org/Books/Mengerprinciples.pdf>
- McClelland, D. C. (1961). *The achieving society*. New York, NY: D. Van Nostrand Company Inc.
- McDonald, S., Gan, B. C., & Anderson, A. (2004, November 26). *Studying entrepreneurship: A review of methods employed in entrepreneurship research 1985-2004*. Paper presented at RENT XVIII, Copenhagen, Denmark, 25026.
- McElhanon K.A., & Headland, T. N. (2004). Componential analysis. In M. Lewis-Beck, A. E. Bryman & T. F. Liao (Ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of social science research methods* (pp. 157-158). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- McGrath, R. E. (2005). Conceptual complexity and construct validity. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 85(2), 112-124.
- McGrath, R., & McMillan, I. (2000). *The Entrepreneurial Mindset*. Boston: HBS Press.
- McMullen, J.S., & Shepherd, D. (2006). Entrepreneurial action and the role of uncertainty in the theory of the entrepreneur. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(1), 132-152.
- McKenzie, B., Ugbeh, S. D., & Smothers, N. (2007). "Who is an entrepreneur?" Is it still the wrong question? *Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal*, 13(1), 23-43.
- McMullen, J., & Shepherd, D. (2006). Entrepreneurial action and the role of uncertainty in the theory of entrepreneurs. *Academy of Management Review*, 31, 132-152.
- Menger, C. (1871). *Principles of Economics*. Auber, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute.
- Michellini, L. (2012). *Social innovation and new business models: Creating shared value in low-income markets*. New York, NY: Springer Heidelberg.
- Mill, J. S. (1844). *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions in Political Economy*. London: John W.



- Parker. Retrieved from <http://tinyardurl.com/d1201108e>
- Miller, D. (1983). The correlates of entrepreneurship in three types of firms. *Management Science*, 29(7), 770-791.
- Mintzberg, H. (1989). *Mintzberg on management: Inside our strange world of organizations*. Chicago IL: Free Press.
- Mintzberg, H. (2014). Rebalancing Society: radical renewal beyond left, right, and center. Retrieved from [http://mintxberg.org/sites/default/files/rebalancing\\_society\\_pamphlet.pdf](http://mintxberg.org/sites/default/files/rebalancing_society_pamphlet.pdf)
- Mishler, E.G. (1995). Models of narrative analysis: A typology. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 5(2), 87-123.
- Mitchell, R. K., Busenitz, L., Bird, B., Gaglio, C. M., McMullen, J., Morse, E., et al. (2007). The central question in entrepreneurial cognition research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 31(1), 1-27.
- Mitchell, R. K., Smith, J. B., Morse, E A., Seawright, K.W., Peredo, A.M., & McKenzie, B (2002). Are entrepreneurial cognitions universal? Assessing entrepreneurial cognitions across cultures. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, 26(4), 9-32.
- Mitchell, J. R., Friga, P. N., and Mitchell, R. K. (2005). Untangling the intuition mess: Intuition as a construct in entrepreneurship research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 29(6), 653–679. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6520.2005.00102.x
- Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (10th ed.). (1993). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.
- Morris, M. H., Coombes, S., Schindehutte, M., & Allen, J. (2007). Antecedents and outcomes of entrepreneurial and market orientations in a non-profit context: Theoretical and empirical Insights. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 13(4), 12-39.

- Morris, M. H., Kuratko, D. F., Schindehutte, M., & Spivack, A. J. (2011). Framing the entrepreneurial experience. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 1, 11-40.
- Moroz, P. W., & Hindle, K. (2012). Entrepreneurship as a process: Toward harmonizing multiple perspectives. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 36(4), 781-818.
- Moustakas, C. E. (1990). *Heuristic research: Design, methodology, and applications*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Moustakas, C. E. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Murphy, B. (2014). 12 Words that will change everything you think about entrepreneurship. *TheMid.com*. 3(25). Retrieved from <http://www.inc.com/bill-murphy-jr/12-words-that-will-change-everything-you-think-about-entrepreneurship.html>
- Murphy, P. J., & Marvel, M. R. (2007). *The opportunity-based approach to entrepreneurial discovery research*. DePaul University. From the Selected Works of Patrick J. Murphy. Retrieved from <http://works.bepress.com/profpjm/11>
- Murphy, P. J., Liao, J., & Welsch, H. (2006). A conceptual history of entrepreneurial thought. *Journal of Management History*, 12(1), 12-35.
- Nambisan, S. (2012). On “Entrepreneurial Thinking”. Retrieved from [http://nambisan.typepad.com/satish\\_nambisan/](http://nambisan.typepad.com/satish_nambisan/)
- Neergaard, H., & Ulhoi, J. P. (2007). *Handbook of qualitative research methods in entrepreneurship*. William Pratt House, 9 Dewey Court, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060 USA: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd
- Nicolaou, N., Shane, S., Cherkas, L., Hunkin, J., & Spector, T. D. (2008). Is the tendency to engage in entrepreneurship genetic? *Management Science*, 54(1), 167-179.
- Oinas, P., & Malecki, E. J. (2002). The evolution of technologies in time and space: From

national and regional to spatial innovation systems. *International Regional Science Review*, 24(1), 102-130.

Orhan, M. (2005). Why women enter into small business ownership. In S. L. Fielden & M. J. Davidson (Eds.), *International handbook of women and small business entrepreneurship* (pp. 3-16). Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Orlikowski, W. (1996). Improvising organisational transformation over time: A situated change perspective. *Information Systems Research*, 7(1), 63-92.

Patterson, J., Purkey, S., & Parker, J. (1986). *Productive school systems for a nonrational world*. Alexandria, VA: Association for supervision and Curriculum Development.

Parker, S. (2005). The economics of entrepreneurship: What we know and what we don't. *Foundations and Trends in Entrepreneurship*, 1(1), 1-54.

Pauls, S. (2013, September 9). Robert Chipman loses battle with cancer. *CBC news*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/robert-chipman-loses-battle-with-cancer-1.1701751>

Pittaway, L., & Cope, J. (2007). Simulating entrepreneurial learning: Assessing the utility of entrepreneurial learning designs. *Management Learning*, 38(2), 211-233.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2007). Validity issues in narrative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*. 13(4), 471-486. Retrieved from <http://quix.sagepub.com>

Quarter, J., Mook, L., & Armstrong, A. (2009). *Understanding the social economy: A Canadian perspective*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Rainey, L. (1999, November 1). On The Road Again. *Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame*. Retrieved from <http://horseracinghalloffame.com/1999/11/01/on-the-road-again/>

Raposo, M., Ferreira, J., Paço, A., & Rodrigues, R. (2008). Propensity to firm creation:

Empirical research using structural equations. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 4, 485-504.

Rauch, A., & Frese, M. (2007). Let's put the person back into entrepreneurship research: A meta-analysis on the relationship between business owners' personality traits, business creation, and success. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 16, 353-385.

Raposo, M., Ferreira, J., Paço, A., & Rodrigues, R. (2008). Propensity to firm creation: Empirical research using structural equations. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 4, 485-504.

Reimers-Hild, C. I., King, J. W., Foster, J. E., Fritz, S. M., Waller, S. S., & Wheeler, D. W. (2005). A framework for the "entrepreneurial" learner of the 21st century. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 1-11. Retrieved from <http://westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/summer82/summer82.htm>

Reynolds, P. D. (1971). *A primer in theory construction*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Reynolds, P. D. (1991). Sociology and entrepreneurship: Concepts and contributions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 16(2), 47-49.

Reynolds, P. D. (2000). National panel study of US business startups: Background and methodology. *Databases for the Study of Entrepreneurship*, 4, 153-227.

Ricardo, D. (1817). On the principals of political economy and taxation. In P. Straffa (Eds.), *Works and correspondence of David Ricardo* (pp.135-140). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ridgeway, C. L., & Erickson, K. G. (2000). Creating and Spreading Status Beliefs. *American Journal of Sociology*, 106, 579-615.

- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. CA USA: Sage Publications.
- Riessman, C. K., & Speedy J. (2007). Narrative inquiry in the psychotherapy professions. In D. J. Clandinin (Eds.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry* (pp. 426-456). London: SAGE
- Robbins, P., & Alvy, H. B. (2004). *The new principal's fieldbook: Strategies for success*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD Publications.
- Robinson, K. (2001). *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be creative*. Capstone Publishing Ltd. WILEY. Chichester, West Sussex.
- Ruderstam, K. E., & Newton, R. R. (2001). *Surviving your dissertation (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Sánchez, J.C. (2012). Entrepreneurial intentions: The role of the cognitive variables. *Entrepreneurship - born, made and educated*. In T. Burger-Helmchen (Eds.), *Business, Management and Economics* (pp. 28- 50). Retrieved from: <http://www.intechopen.com/books/entrepreneurship-born-made-and-educated/entrepreneurial-intentions-the-role-of-the-cognitive-variables>
- Sandberg, W. R. (1987). Improving new venture performance: The role of strategy, industry structure and the entrepreneur. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 2(1), 5-28.
- Sandler, M. R. (2010). *Social entrepreneurship in education: Private ventures for the public good*. Estover Road, Plymouth PL6 7P7 UK: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Santos-Cumplido, F. J., & Liñán, F. (2007). Measuring entrepreneurial quality in southern Europe. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*. 3, 87-107.
- Sarason, S. (1982). *The culture of the school and the problem of change* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

- Sarasvathy, S. D. (2001a). Causation and effectuation: Toward a theoretical shift from economic inevitability to entrepreneurial contingency. *The Academy of Management Review*. 26(2), 243-263.
- Sarasvathy, S. D. (2003). Entrepreneurship as a science of the artificial. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 24(2), 203-200.
- Sarasvathy, S. D. (2008). What makes entrepreneurs entrepreneurial? *Social Science Research Network*. Retrieved from <http://ssrn.com/abstract=909038>
- Say, J. B. (1845). *A treatise on political economy*. Philadelphia: Grigg and Elliot.
- Scarborough, N., Wilson, D., & Zimmer, T.W. (2009). *Effective Small Business Management: An Entrepreneurial Approach*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Schein, E. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: John Wiley & Sons. Jossey-Bass.
- Schoonhoven, C. B., & Romanelli, E. (2001). *The entrepreneurship dynamic: Origins of entrepreneurship and the evolution of industries*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Schneider, M., Teske, P., & Mintrom, M. (1995). *Public entrepreneurs: Agents for change in American government*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Schumpeter, J. A. (1934). *The theory of economic development: An inquiry into profits, capital, credit, interest, and the business cycle* (R. Opiek, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Schumpeter, J. A. (1942). *Capitalism, socialism and democracy* (5th ed.). New York: Harper and Brothers.
- Schumpeter, J. A. (1961). *The theory of economic development*. (R. Opie, Trans.). New York: Oxford University Press.

- Schwarz, E., Almer-Jarz, D., & Wdowiak, M (2006). A structural model of entrepreneurial intent among students: Findings from Austria. In D. Urbano (Ed.), *Diversity in entrepreneurship*: 3rd Inter-RENT Online Publication (pp. 29-43). Turku: European Council for Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Retrieved from [http://www.researchgate.net/publication/259590646\\_A\\_Structural\\_Model\\_of\\_Entrepreneurial\\_Intent\\_among\\_Students\\_Findings\\_from\\_Austria](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/259590646_A_Structural_Model_of_Entrepreneurial_Intent_among_Students_Findings_from_Austria)
- Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline*. New York, NY: Doubleday.
- Shane, S. (2003). *A general theory of entrepreneurship: The individual-opportunity nexus*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. *Academy of Management Review*, 26(1), 217-226.
- Shapero, A., & Sokol, L. (1982). The social dimensions of entrepreneurship. In C. A. Kent, D. L. Sexton, & K. H. Vesper (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of entrepreneurship* (pp. 72-90). Englewood Cliffs, N J: Prentice Hall.
- Shepherd, D. A., & Douglas, E. J. (1997). Is management education developing, or killing, the entrepreneurial spirit? Retrieved from [sbaer.uca.edu/research/icsb/1997/73.pdf](http://sbaer.uca.edu/research/icsb/1997/73.pdf)
- Simon, M., Houghton, S., & Aquino, K. (2000). Cognitive biases, risk perception, and venture formation: How individuals decide to start companies. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 15, 113-134.
- Sokolowski, R. (2000). *Introduction to Phenomenology*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge UK.
- Solomon, G. (2007). An examination of entrepreneurship education in the United States. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*. 14(2) 168-182.

- Solymosy, E. (1997). Push/pull motivation: Does it matter in venture performance? In P. D. Reynolds, W. D. Bygrave, N. M. Carter, P. Davidsson, W. B. Gartner, C. M. Mason, & P. P. McDougall (Eds.), *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research* (pp. 204- 217). Wellesley, MA: Babson College.
- Solymosy, E. (1998). Entrepreneurial dimensions: The relationship of individual, venture, and environmental factors to success (Ph.D. Dissertation). Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH. Retrieved from [faculty.wiu.edu](http://faculty.wiu.edu)
- Steensma, H. K., Marino, L., & Weaver, K. M. (2000). Attitudes toward cooperative strategies: A cross-cultural analysis of entrepreneurs. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 31(4), 591-609.
- Stevenson, H. H. (1983). *A Perspective on Entrepreneurship* (Vol. 13). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Stevenson, H.H. (2000, February 17). Why entrepreneurship has won! *Coleman White Paper*. USASBE National Conference. Retrieved from [http://www.unm.edu/~asalazar/Kauffman/Entrep\\_research/e\\_won.pdf](http://www.unm.edu/~asalazar/Kauffman/Entrep_research/e_won.pdf)
- Stevenson, H. H., & Gumpert, D. E. (1985). The heart of entrepreneurship. *Harvard Business Review*, 85(2), 85-94.
- Stevenson, H. H., & Jarillo, J. C. (1990). A paradigm of entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial management. *Strategic Management Journal*, 11, 17-27.
- Stewart, W., & Roth, P. (2001). Risk taking propensity differences between entrepreneurs and managers: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(1), 145-153.
- Strauss, S.D. (2013). *Planet entrepreneur: The world entrepreneurship forum's guide to success around the world*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.



- Swanson, L. A., & Zhang, D. D. (2010). The social entrepreneurship zone. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 13(3), 71-88.
- Swanson, L. A., & Zhang, D. D. (2012). Social entrepreneurship. In T. Burger-Helmchen (Eds.), *Entrepreneurship - gender, geographies, and social context* (pp. 171-190). Strasbourg, France: InTech.
- Simpson, J. A., Weiner, E. S. C. (2006). *The Oxford Canadian Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Thompson, J. L. (2002). The world of the social entrepreneur. *The International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 15(4), 412-431.
- Turgot, A. R. J. (1793). *Reflections on the formation and distribution of wealth*.  
Retrieved from <http://www.econlib.org/library/Essays/trgRf11.html>
- USHWA (2011, January 17). 'A special Lady' earns John Hervey award. *Standardbred Canada*.  
Retrieved from <http://www.standardbredcanada.ca>
- Van Maanen, J. (1995). Style as theory. *Organization Science*, 6(1), 133- 143.
- Van Manen, M. (2001). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: Althouse Press.
- Van de Ven, A.H. (1993). The distinctive domain of entrepreneurship research. *Advances in Entrepreneurship, Firm Emergence and Growth*, 3, 119-138.
- Van Praag, M. C., & Versloot, P. H. (2008). The economic benefits and costs of entrepreneurship: A review of the research. *Foundations and Trends in Entrepreneurship Research*, 4(2), 65-154.
- Venkataraman, S. (1997). The distinctive domain of entrepreneurship research. *Advances in Entrepreneurship, Firm Emergence and Growth*, 3, 139-199.

- Vesper, K. H., & Gartner, W. B. (1997). Measuring progress in entrepreneurship education. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 12(5), 403-421.
- Von Bargen, P., Freedman, D., & Pages, E. (2003). The rise of the entrepreneurial society. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 17, 315-324.
- von Eckartsberg, R. (1986). *Lifeworld experience: Existential-phenomenological research approaches in psychology*. Washington, DC: Centre for Advanced Research in Phenomenology & University Press of America.
- Von Mises, L. (1949). *Human Action*. New Haven: Yale U Press.
- Wagner, T. (2012). *Creating innovators: The making of young people who will change the world*. New York, NY: Scribner.
- Wareham, J. (1991). *Anatomy of a great executive*. Kent Lakes, NY: Wareham Associates, Inc.
- Weber, M. (1904). (Original manuscript 1958) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Translated by Talcott Parsons. New York, NY: Scribner's.
- Webster, F. A. (1976). A mode for new venture initiation. A discourse on rapacity and the independent entrepreneur. *Academy of Management Review*, 1(1), 26-37.
- Webster, L., & Mertova, P. (2007). *Using narrative inquiry as a research method: An introduction to using critical event narrative analysis in research on learning and teaching*. Routledge , 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX.
- Wee, C., Lim, W., & Lee, R. (1994). Entrepreneurship: A review with implications for further research. *Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship*, 11(4), 25-49.
- Weick, K. E., & Quinn, R. E. (1999). Organisational change and development. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 50, 361-386.
- Wennekers & Thurik, (1999). Linking entrepreneurship and economic growth. *Small Business*

*Economics*, 13(1), 27-55.

Wiklund, J., & Shepherd, D. (2003). Knowledge-based resources, entrepreneurial orientation, and the performance of small and medium-sized business. *Strategic Management Journal*, 24(13), 1307-1314.

Wilpert, B. (1995). Organizational behavior. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 46(1), 59-90.

Witzel, M. (2012). *A History of Management Thought*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Wolfe, C. (2008, March 9). [Press release from Junior Achievement Hall of Fame]. *A Driving Force in Nova Scotian Business*. Retrieved from <http://jacan.org/uploads/d36151+AlMacPheereleasefinal.pdf>

Wolk, S. (2008). School as Inquiry. *Phi Delta Kappa*, 90(02), 115-122.  
Retrieved from [http://publicboard.ca/Staff/Teachers/SocialStudies/Documents/School\\_as\\_Inquiry\\_PDK.pdf](http://publicboard.ca/Staff/Teachers/SocialStudies/Documents/School_as_Inquiry_PDK.pdf)

Wood, M. S. (2009). Population level conditions as signals of entrepreneurial opportunities: A cognitive synthesis of the entrepreneurial traits and population rates perspectives. (Ph.D. Dissertation), Retrieved from <http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1108&content=dissertations>.  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

York, J. G., & Venkataraman, S. (2010). The entrepreneur-environment nexus: Uncertainty, innovation, and allocation. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 25, 449-463.

Zahra, S. A., & Garvis, D. (2000). International corporate entrepreneurship and firm performance: The moderating effect of international environmental hostility. *Journal of*

*Business Venturing*, 15, 469-92.

Zhao, Y. (2012). *World class learners: Educating creative and entrepreneurial students*.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Zhao, H., Seibert, S. & Hills, G. (2005). The mediating role of self-efficacy in the development of entrepreneurial intentions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(6), 1265–1272.

Zoltan, J. & Audretsch, D. B. (2005, May 25). [Prepared for the 2005 Summer Institute of Entrepreneurship, Growth & Public Policy Division of the Max Planck Institute of Economics] *Entrepreneurship and Innovation*. Retrieved from [http://www.econ.mpg.de/files/2005/egpsummerinst05/papers/zacs-entrepreneurship\\_and\\_innovation.pdf](http://www.econ.mpg.de/files/2005/egpsummerinst05/papers/zacs-entrepreneurship_and_innovation.pdf)

## *Appendices*

## ***Appendix A***

### Approved Ethics Proposal



## Application for Behavioural Research Ethics Review

### *Evaluating Applications*

The matters of greatest concern to the Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Beh-REB) are the issues of informed consent of participants, voluntary participation, protection of individual privacy (confidentiality and anonymity), and safeguarding participants from any harmful results due to participation or non-participation in the proposed investigation or research project. Our evaluation of an application is based on the degree to which each of these concerns are satisfied; when filling out the application, researchers are urged to consider these points, and to explain to the Beh-REB the steps they will take to address the concerns. Researchers are also urged to consult the [Tri-Council Policy Statement 2](#) for more information and guidance.

The Beh-REB acknowledges the variety of paradigms and methodologies currently available to researchers, and that each of these paradigms entails its own particular ethical issues. Thus, there may be more than one way to address an ethical issue. Researchers should feel free to suggest alternative approaches or to explain why a particular requirement is not appropriate in the context of a given project.

**\*\*All text boxes will expand once <Enter> is selected or the cursor moves to the next section. \*\***

PART 1: IDENTIFICATION	
1.1	<b>Project Title</b> <a href="#">GN 1.1</a> The Mind of the Entrepreneur: Researching lived experience
1.2	<b>Principal Investigator</b> <a href="#">GN 1.2</a> Full Name: Dr Keith Walker Mailing Address: University of Saskatchewan Email: keith.walker@usask.ca Phone: 306 716-4835 NSID number (U of S faculty only): KDW744
1.3	<b>University/Institutional Affiliation of Principal Investigator</b> <a href="#">GN 1.3</a> Position: Professor Department: Education Administration & JSGSPP, University of Saskatchewan Division: Education & JSGSPP
1.4	If this is a student/graduate/resident project, please provide the following information: <a href="#">GN 1.4</a> a) Student Name(s) and Student ID or NSID (s): Cynthia Gladys Baum cgb670 b) Supervisor Name: Dr. Keith Walker
1.5	<b>Project Personnel (include graduates/post graduates/residents):</b> <a href="#">GN 1.5</a> <div style="float: right; text-align: right;"> <input type="button" value="Add Personnel"/> <input type="button" value="Remove Last"/> </div> Full Name: _____ Project Position/Role: _____ University/Institutional Affiliation: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____
1.6	<b>Primary Contact Person for Correspondence (if different than Section 1.2)</b> <a href="#">GN 1.6</a> Full Name: _____ Mailing Address: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

1.7	Research Site(s) where project will be carried out: <u>Within Canada</u>
1.8	1.8.1 Proposed Project Period: <a href="#">GN 1.8</a> From (MM/DD/YY) <u>07/1/12</u> To (MM/DD/YY) <u>02/31/13</u>
1.9	<p>1.9.1 Has this project applied for/received ethical approval from any other Research Ethics Board? <a href="#">GN 1.9</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1.9.2 Please be advised that approvals may need to be sought if you are collecting data from schools, within health regions and may be required from other organizations, agencies, or community groups. Will you be contacting potential participants or collecting data from any such organizations? <a href="#">GN 1.9.2</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
1.10	1.10.1 Status of Funds: <a href="#">GN 1.10</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Awarded <input type="checkbox"/> Pending <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unfunded

## PART 2: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

2.1	<p>2.1.1 Is there any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest (any personal or financial interest in the conduct or outcome of this project)? <a href="#">GN 2.1</a></p> <p><u>There is no conflict of interest, real, potential or perceived.</u></p> <p>2.1.2 Will any of the researcher(s), members of the research team and/or their immediate family members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive personal benefits in connection with this project over and above the direct costs of conducting the project, such as remuneration or employment?</li> <li>Receive significant payments of other sorts from the sponsor such as grants, compensation in the form of equipment or supplies or retainers for ongoing consultation and honoraria?</li> <li>Have a non-financial relationship with a sponsor (such as unpaid consultant, board membership, advisor or other non-financial interest)?</li> <li>Have any direct involvement with the sponsor such as stock ownership, stock options or board membership.</li> <li>Hold patents, trademarks, copyrights, licensing agreements or intellectual property rights linked in any way to this project or the sponsor?</li> <li>Have any other relationship, financial or non-financial, that if not disclosed, could be construed as a conflict of interest?</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
-----	--

## PART 3: BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH PROJECT

3.1	<p>Briefly describe the project, its objectives and potential significance (250-500 words): <a href="#">GN 3.1</a></p> <p>The popularity of entrepreneurship as a market-driven advantage, has been accompanied with increasing number of claims to undergird the assumption that entrepreneurs are inclusively the creators of new businesses (Gartner, 1985). Contrary to this, it can be argued that not all small business owners, or even all successful business people, are entrepreneurs. There is, however, a movement toward recognizing the work of entrepreneurs in the social sector. The creation of terms such as 'social entrepreneur' have attempted to fill this gap but are most often still defined by business creation (Scarborough, Wilson, and Zimmer (2009).</p> <p>In education, any hint of profit-centeredness seems to cast a shadow on any partnerships involving businesses and schools. The idea that an educator might be entrepreneurial plays out in an automatic expectation of someone who needs to leave teaching to begin an educationally-driven business (Leisey &amp; Lavaroni, 2000). On the other hand, schools have employed business entrepreneurs to help reclaim, refund and rejuvenate student and school capacity (Childress, 2010).</p> <p>Very minimal research has sought to explore the links of entrepreneurial thinking to the benefits of such thinking to other sectors; there is a void in research with respect to entrepreneurial thinking in the education context. How might the way that entrepreneurs think, how they view the world, their drives and their perceptions of their role as entrepreneurs provide insights in the not-for-profit, political and/or educational realms.</p> <p>To reach deeper understandings of this phenomena (the entrepreneurial mind), this research initiates purposeful conversations with selected entrepreneurs who will discuss their views and experiences with the entrepreneurial orientation, as well as provide perspectives on how they see themselves and their contexts. These perspectives will be contrasted to the extant literature. It is anticipated that these findings will inform our understanding of entrepreneurs outside of traditional business settings and undergird future planning, related to educating entrepreneurs for both K-12 and post-secondary institutions.</p>
-----	---



3.2	<p>Provide a description of research design and methods to be used: <a href="#">GN 3.2</a></p> <p>This study is designed as a phenomenological and narrative-like study. Participants will be self-identified entrepreneurs who have been invited to take part in these semi-structured interviews, either individually or as a group. The interviews will be recorded using either audio or video as the location allows. Ideally, there will be an opportunity for a follow-up interview where the researcher would bring some of the willing participants together as a focus group, to talk about emerging themes from the study. This would be a valuable way to add to the credibility, dependability and confirmability of the data. This focus group opportunity will also offer a measure of transferability to the results of the study as well as to the participants and their present involvements.</p>												
3.3	<p>Provide details regarding the duration and location of data collection event(s): <a href="#">GN 3.3</a></p> <p>the researcher will interview participants using open-ended questions</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaire</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Participant Observation</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Interviews</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Groups</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Interview</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Non-invasive physical measurements</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Video/audio recording</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Secondary use of data or analysis of existing data</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Home Visits</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Ethnography</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaire	<input type="checkbox"/> Participant Observation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Interview	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-invasive physical measurements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Video/audio recording	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary use of data or analysis of existing data	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Visits	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethnography	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaire	<input type="checkbox"/> Participant Observation												
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Interviews	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Groups												
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Interview	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-invasive physical measurements												
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Video/audio recording	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary use of data or analysis of existing data												
<input type="checkbox"/> Home Visits	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethnography												
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/>													

PART 4: PROJECT DETAILS	
4.1	<p>4.1.1 Will you have any internet-based interaction with participants? <a href="#">GN 4.1</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
4.2	<p>4.2.1 Will your research involve Aboriginal Peoples including First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples? <a href="#">GN 4.2</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
4.3	<p>4.3.1 Will the project involve community-based participatory research? <a href="#">GN 4.3</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
4.4	<p>Will deception of any kind be necessary in this project? <a href="#">GN 4.4</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
4.5	<p>Indicate how the participants will be debriefed following their participation (if applicable), and describe how the information on the results of the research will be made available to participants once the study has ended. Debriefing is particularly important if deception has been used. <a href="#">GN 4.5</a></p> <p>After the interview, participants will receive a copy of the transcript so they can read and recheck the transcripts for accuracy of information and meaning. They will be given the opportunity to eliminate any information that they feel misrepresents their intentions in any way. This will also be an opportunity for them to withdraw from the study, should they choose, or re-consent to participation in the study. Participants will also be invited to discuss the themes that emerge from this study in focus group type discussions if they choose. This will be optional but should provide an opportunity for the participants to clarify any thoughts or concerns. At any time, participants may choose to withdraw from the study. Participants will be able to access the results of the study through the written work (scholarly journals, books...). Participants will also be invited to maintain contact with the researcher for further discussions and follow-up.</p>
4.6	<p>Will participants be compensated? <a href="#">GN 4.6</a></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
4.7	<p>4.7.1 Will participants be anonymous in the data gathering phase of the study? (Anonymous means that no link can be established between the participant and the research - no one including the researcher knows who has participated in the research):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>4.7.2 Will the confidentiality of participants and their data be protected? (Confidentiality means that no link can be established between the collected information and the participant's identity)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>4.7.3 If yes, are there any limits to confidentiality:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limits due to the nature of group activities (e.g. focus groups): the researcher cannot guarantee confidentiality</p>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Limits due to context: individual participants could be identified because of the nature or size of the sample or because of their relationship with the researcher.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Limits due to selection: procedures for recruiting or selecting participants may compromise the confidentiality of participants (e.g. participants are referred to the study by a person outside the research team)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

## PART 5: ESTIMATION OF RISKS AND BENEFITS

5.1	5.1.1 Do you consider this project to be: <a href="#">GN 5.1</a>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minimal Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Above Minimal Risk
	5.1.2 Indicate if the participants might experience any of the following:
	Risk of psychological or emotional harm or discomfort (e.g. trauma, anxiety, stress)
	no.
	Legal repercussions for participating in the study (e.g. possibility of being sued, charged with criminal activity, disclosure of past or future criminal activities, etc.)
	no
	Social repercussions (e.g. ostracized, being negatively judged by peers or employer, fired from your job)
	no
	Risk of physical harm or discomfort (e.g. falling, muscle pain, tiredness, weakness, nausea)
no	
5.1.3 Describe how the risk will be managed (including an explanation as to why an alternative approach could not be used). If appropriate, identify any resources, e.g. physician or counselor, to which participants can be referred. <a href="#">GN 5.1.3</a>	
This study is considered to be observational not interventional research with minimal risk to participants. The interviews will be conducted with fully competent and consenting adults. Participants will choose to participate anonymously or to be named but this is a minimal risk topic and is non-invasive (with those who chose to be identified having choice with respect to the inclusion of their data, in whole or part). The results will be reported in such a way that the participant will have sufficient input throughout the process so as to eliminate any potential negative impact on themselves or others.	
5.1.4 If above minimal risk, what are the likely benefits of the research to the researcher, participant, the research community and society that would justify asking participants to participate? <a href="#">GN 5.1.4</a>	

## PART 6: PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

6.1	Describe the participants and the criteria for their inclusion or exclusion. Indicate the number of participants and a brief rationale for the intended number of participants: <a href="#">GN 6.1</a>
	I will contact entrepreneurs who fit the study based on their involvement in at least three of the four considered areas: not-for-profit, politics, education, or business. For example, it could include an entrepreneur who has lead a specific not-for-profit sector by creatively influencing its political and educational capacity. The participant will need to confirm that they believe that they fit the criteria and volunteer to participate in the study. I would like to interview up to 10 people.
6.2.1	Provide a detailed description of the method of recruitment. <a href="#">GN 6.2</a>
The researcher will identify prospective participants through their noted involvement and self proclaimed entrepreneurial abilities. The interviewer will contact (in person or by phone) the prospective participants and provide an explanation of who I am, the university I represent, how I came to identify them as a possible participant, a description of the planned study and projected time frames (see 'initial telephone contact sheet'). If the contact would like to be considered as a participant, an introductory letter will be sent which explains the study in detail (see 'Letter of Interview Consent'). The researcher will follow-up personally to discuss questions, and if possible, to set up interview time(s).	
6.2.2	How will prospective participants be identified?
participants will be identified based on their involvement in at least three of four of the considered areas (not-for-profit, politics, education, and/or business. They will be identified through their published work, recommendation, or identifiable track record of influence.	
6.2.3	Who will contact prospective participants? Describe the source of the contact information, how they will be contacted and as applicable, who originally collected the contact information. Ensure any letters of initial contact or other recruitment materials are attached, e.g. advertisements, flyers, telephone script, etc.

	I will contact each participant through the appropriate method for each one (job, web-site..etc). See 'Initial Telephone Contact Sheet' and 'Letter of Interview Consent'.
6.3	In cases where the research involves special or vulnerable populations, distinct cultural groups, or in cases where the research is above minimal risk, the researcher should describe their experience or training in working with the population. If none of these criteria apply, this section may be omitted. <a href="#">GN 6.3</a>
6.4	Where relevant, please explain any relationship (pre-existing, current or expected to have) between the researcher(s) and the researched (e.g. instructor-student, manager-employee, co-workers, family members/intimate relationships, etc). Please pay special attention to relationships in which there may be a power differential. Describe any safeguards and procedures to prevent possible undue influence, coercion or inducement. <a href="#">GN 6.4</a> Participants will be those who have been identified based on published work, recommendations from others, noted accomplishments. All participation will be voluntary and participants will have the opportunity to reconsider any material from their interviews before it is included in the study or summaries. There will be no members of my family/intimate relationships interviewed. There will be no means for power differentials. All participants will be considered on their own merit as an entrepreneur.

## PART 7: CONSENT PROCESS

	Describe the process that will be used to obtain informed consent. Please note that it is the content of the consent, not the format that is important. If the research involves collection of personally identifiable information from a research participant or extraction of personally identifiable information from an existing database, please describe how consent from the individuals or authorization from the data custodian will be obtained. If there will be no written consent, please provide a rationale for oral or implied consent (e.g., cultural appropriateness, online questionnaire, etc.) and explain how consent will be recorded.
7.1	<p>7.1.1 Describe the consent process. <a href="#">GN 7.1</a> Participants will sign a 'Letter of Interview Consent' form which will explain the intent of the research, confidentiality, withdrawing options as well as how the results and interpretations will be assembled and used. After the participant has read the transcripts, a release form will be signed to obtain permission to use the information in my study and for future use of the results. An optional opportunity to meet as a focus group will be offered. For those who take part in these discussions, a consent form will provide adequate information for the participant to make an informed decision. Each participant will have the option to opt out of the study at any time. Accordingly, the tape-recordings and interview transcripts will be destroyed.</p> <p>7.1.2 Who will ask for consent? The researcher will ask for consent.</p> <p>7.1.3 Where, and under what circumstances will consent be obtained? Consent will be continued from the first conversation, then by way of the written consent, and will be verbally re-affirmed at each stage. Participants will review transcripts and give consent for the material to be used for publication and presentation</p> <p>7.1.4 Describe any situation in which the renewal of consent for this research might be appropriate and how this would take place (e.g. longitudinal studies, multiple data collection events, etc.). The researcher will make an opportunity for participants to take part in a focus group. The participants will once again be given an opportunity to reaffirm their consent for this material to be used and published.</p>
7.2	If any or all of the participants are children and/or are not competent to consent, describe the process by which capacity/competency will be assessed, the proposed alternate source of consent - including any permission/information letter to be provided to the person(s) providing the alternate consent - as well as the assent process for all adult participants. <a href="#">GN 7.2</a>
7.3	Describe your plans for providing project results to the participant? <a href="#">GN 7.3</a> The participant will receive transcripts of interviews for their consent. The results will be available to all participants at the culmination of the study. The researcher will also make available time for the participants to discuss the findings and to receive and offer feedback on the results of the study and how it can inform what they are doing, how one may look at and train entrepreneurs in each situation as well as the overall value of the study to each of them.
7.4	How and when are participants informed of the right to withdraw? What procedures will be followed for participants who wish to withdraw at any point during the study? <a href="#">GN 7.4</a> Participants will be provided the option to withdraw at any time throughout the study at which time all tape-recordings and interview documents will be destroyed.

## PART 8: DATA SECURITY AND STORAGE

Indicate the procedures you plan to implement to safeguard and store the data. Identify the person who will be assuming responsibility for data storage (University regulations require the researcher or the supervisor, in the case of student research, to securely store the data at the University of Saskatchewan for a minimum of five years upon the completion of the study - ( <a href="#">Procedures for Stewardship of Research Records at the University of Saskatchewan 2010</a> ))	
8.1	Who will conduct the data collection? <a href="#">GN 8.1</a> The researcher - Cynthia G. Baum (cgb670)
8.2	Who will have access to the original data of the study? <a href="#">GN 8.2</a> Only myself, the researcher, and my supervisor, Dr. Keith Walker of the Department of Educational Administration and Johnson Shoyama Graduate of Public Policy, will have access to the original data of the study. All participants will have the opportunity to choose to have their interviews remain confidential.
8.3	How will confidentiality of original data be maintained as well as preserving or destroying data after the research is completed. For all data (e.g. paper records, audio or visual recordings, electronic recordings), indicate the: <a href="#">GN 8.3</a> <b>8.3.1 Person responsible for data storage:</b> Upon completion of the study, all collected data will be retained by my supervisor, Dr. Keith Walker of the Department of Educational Administration and Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, according to the guidelines defined by the University of Saskatchewan. After the study is complete, data will be stored in a locked cabinet for a minimum of five years. After this period of time, the data will be destroyed.
	<b>8.3.2 Data security during transportation from collection site:</b> Data will be recorded on a recording device that is password protected. Both tools have security locks that automatically kick in after 2 minutes of non use. I, alone, know the password. After 7 missed attempts at unlocking the devices, they are locked and a message is sent to my e-mail address. If the participant chooses not to be identified, the researcher will identify the participant through a combination of indirect identifiers such as codes or numbers. All identifiers will be removed from the documentation and replaced with the code or number. The researcher will have the codes locked in the computer.
	<b>8.3.3 Means and location of storage (e.g. a locked filing cabinet, password protected computer files, encryption):</b> Locked office separate from public or cohort access, locked computer and recording devices with automatic locking system.
	<b>8.3.4 Time duration of storage (Must be &gt; 5 Years):</b> After the study is complete, data will be stored in a locked cabinet for a minimum of five years. After this period of time, the data will be destroyed.
	<b>8.3.5 Final disposition (archive, shredding, electronic file deletion):</b> All written transcripts will be shredded and electronic versions will be deleted.
8.4	Indicate how the data collected is intended to be used (thesis, journal articles, conference presentation, media, etc). <a href="#">GN 8.4</a> The data collected will be for dissertation work. The recommendations from this research will be used in journal articles, conference presentations and written material (ie. books).

**PART 9: Declaration by Principal Investigator  
(or Supervisor for student projects)**

**Project Title**

The Mind of the Entrepreneur: Researching lived experience

- I confirm that the information provided in this application is complete and correct.
- I accept responsibility for the ethical conduct of this project and for the protection of the rights and welfare of the human participants who are directly or indirectly involved in this project.
- I will comply with all policies and guidelines of the University and Health Region/affiliated institutions where this project will be conducted, as well as with all applicable federal and provincial laws regarding the protection of human participants in research.
- I will ensure that project personnel are qualified, appropriately trained and will adhere to the provisions of the REB-approved application.
- I certify that any significant changes to the project, including the proposed method, consent process or recruitment procedures, will be reported to the Research Ethics Board for consideration in advance of its implementation.
- I certify that a status report will be submitted to the Research Ethics Board for consideration within one month of the current expiry date each year the project remains open, and upon project completion.
- If personal health information is requested, I assure that it is the minimum necessary to meet the research objective and will not be reused or disclosed to any parties other than those described in the REB-approved application, except as required by law.
- I confirm that adequate resources to protect participants (i.e., personnel, funding, time, equipment and space) are in place.
- I understand that if the contract or grant related to this research project is being reviewed by the University or Health Region, a copy of the ethics application inclusive of the consent document(s), may be forwarded to the person responsible for the review of the contract or grant.
- I understand that if the project involves Health Region resources or facilities, a copy of the ethics application may be forwarded to the Health Region research coordinator to facilitate operational approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator and/or Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Principal Investigator and/or Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (MM/DD/YY)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Student Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (MM/DD/YY)

**Department Head:** The signature/approval of the Department/Administrative Unit acknowledges that he/she is aware of and supports the research activity described in the proposal (UofS and RQH only)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Department Head

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Department Head

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (MM/DD/YY)

**SECTION 10: APPENDICES [GN 10](#)**

Document	Included?	Description
Recruit Material(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Letter (s) of Initial Contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Initial Telephone Contact Sheet
Consent Form(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Letter of Interview Consent Letter of Focus Group Consent
Assent Form(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Research Tool(s) (e.g. Questionnaires, focus group guides, interview scripts, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Open-ended Interview Format
Transcript Release Form(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Letter of Consent for Release of Transcripts
Other (please specify): <div></div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	

## ***Appendix B***

### **Initial Telephone Contact Sheet Guiding Script**



This research project has been reviewed and approved by the University of  
Saskatchewan Advisory Board on Ethics in Behavioural Science Research on  
June 12, 2012

INITIAL TELEPHONE CONTACT SHEET GUIDING SCRIPT  
Draft or Sample Conversation to Invite Participation and “Qualify” Participants

Hi, My name is Cyndie Baum and I am from the University of Saskatchewan.  
I am in the process of conducting a doctoral study on “the mind of an entrepreneur.” You  
have been recommended to me by \_\_\_\_\_ as a someone who might be a  
potential participate in this study, along with several others (up to 10).

May I tell you a little about my study:

I would like to interview up to 10 entrepreneurs ... entrepreneurs who have influence and  
also work outside of the business sector and/or in market-venture start-up.

I would like to discover how entrepreneurs actually think ... that is - what goes on their  
heads? How do they respond to opportunities, what formative experiences have they had,  
how do they see themselves, others – and so forth.

So you can see, it isn’t simply a study about what they do but rather it is more about how  
they see themselves, what makes them “tick” and perhaps what distinguishes them.

Does this sound like a conversation you might be interested in having?....

Do you agree that you certainly do have influence in a number of these areas? (this will  
have been established before the phone call)...

[if conversation and exchange of thoughts and clarifications results in affirmative  
response then ... ] Thank you!

I will send you a formal invitation to participate with a detailed description of the purpose  
of the study, a confirmation of the ideas we have talked about today and a form that  
invites you to consent to participation (needed for ethics protocol). I would ask that you  
sign this form and fax or e-mail it back to me [I could also pick it up prior to the  
interview ...]

If possible, can we set an interview date and time. Is this something we can do now or  
might it work best for me to contact you later in the week or contact your  
secretary/executive assistant? Is there a time that best suits you?

In the meanwhile, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.  
Here is my cell number...



[If negative response to invitation] Thank you allowing me to share this invitation with you. If you change your mind, and decide, after giving it more thought, that you would like to take part, I would love to hear from you. Here is my contact information....

Thank you so much for your time. It was great to talk with you. All the best.

## ***Appendix C***

### Letter of Interview Consent

## LETTER OF INTERVIEW CONSENT

Thank you for considering this invitation to participate in this research study: *The Mind of An Entrepreneur: Researching Lived Experience*. As the researcher I want to reach deeper understandings of the phenomenon of the entrepreneurial mind through purposeful conversations with selected persons. It is anticipated that these findings will inform our understanding of entrepreneurs and undergird future efforts related to educating entrepreneurs for both K-12 and post-secondary institutions. In order to protect the interest of each person taking part in this study, I will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. You will be interviewed at least once (or more if we mutually agree that subsequent interview(s) are warranted). There may be an opportunity to participate in a group interview (focus group), if you chose that option. I anticipate the interview will take approximately 1.5 hours. I will be recording the interview and you may discontinue the interview, or the recording of interview at any time.
2. After each interview, I will transcribe and analyze the data for major themes. I will send you a copy of the transcript so you have an opportunity to add, delete, or change any part of the transcript (if you choose to do so) such that the document reflects exactly what you had intended to represent. You will then be asked to sign a transcript release form.
3. The data, including all recordings and transcriptions, collected throughout this study will be kept in a secure place with my advisor, Dr. Keith Walker, in accordance with the University of Saskatchewan guidelines.
4. The results and interpretations of this study used in my dissertation. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussion. If you withdraw from the study, the recordings and interview data will be destroyed.

As a participant in this study, you have the right to contact myself, Cyndie Baum, Ph.D. Candidate, College of Graduate Studies and Research, University of Saskatchewan at [cyndie.baum@usask.ca](mailto:cyndie.baum@usask.ca) (403 874-8717, cell), Dr. Keith Walker, academic advisor, Department of Educational Administration and Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of Saskatchewan (1306-966-7623) or Research Services, University of Saskatchewan, (306) 966-8576 Fax: (306) 966-8597 [research.services@usask.ca](mailto:research.services@usask.ca) at anytime if you have questions about the study.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the above guidelines as described to me and agree to participate. I understand the procedures and possible risks which were explained to me by the interviewer. A copy of this form has been given to me for my records and at the end of the study I will have access to a summary of the findings.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## ***Appendix D***

### Interview Format

This research project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Saskatchewan Advisory Board on Ethics in Behavioural Science Research on June 12, 2012

## **INTERVIEW FORMAT –Unstructured interview with Stem or Guiding Questions**

### **Individual Interview**

**[Questions need to move to phenomenon and narrative focus]**

#### **Rapport building**

1. Build rapport with interviewee
2. Overview
  - a) purpose,
  - b) interview format
  - c) reminder of confidentiality
3. Recording
  - a) permission to record
  - b) agreement to turn recorder off at any time

#### **Self-identifying entrepreneurial behaviours**

4. My research is about the mind of an entrepreneur. The working definition that I will be using in my study is from Stevenson (1983) where he refers to an entrepreneur “individuals... pursue opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control.” People, including yourself, have said that you are an entrepreneur. Can you tell me your ‘entrepreneurial story?’ Why might others see you this way?
5. Are there any instances in your life that have kind of helped you to see who you are, from an entrepreneurial perspective?
6. When people have conversations with you about the way you think, and how you approach life, your entrepreneurship, tell me what those conversations are like?
7. As you think of a situation where you have been trying to develop a your values and assumptions about things, where they are getting jostled a little bit, can you tell me what that looks like for you and how you reconcile or go back to your first principles, what is that like for you?
8. Think back to a time when it kind of occurred to you that maybe, whether by the phrase entrepreneur, or otherwise, where you kind of sensed that there

was something about you entrepreneurial or that you had this orientation. Can you remember when that was and what was it like for you?

### **Building/learning to be entrepreneurial**

9. During that time of discovery, were there people around you, activities, or experiences that influenced or nurtured your entrepreneurial abilities?
10. Can you think of a time in school where these differences were showed up, or that you saw something different in others? How did that feel?
11. Do you remember people who built into your life? How did that happen and what kind of things do you remember as being especially meaningful-meaningful enough that still guide you in some way now?
12. Tell me about your educational experience? Were there times when you felt like your ideas were ignored, or when you kind of had to stand alone on something?
13. Within your family (siblings) or your children, tell me of times where you felt that one or more of them were entrepreneurial? What did that look like?

### **Entrepreneurial behaviours**

14. Think about a project you would find yourself heading up. Tell me about the person you would most want on your team, what would they be like, what would you see as their role in the team?
15. Gartner states that entrepreneurs are those who start new businesses- has there been a time that you started a new business and what was that like?
16. Talk to me about what kinds of things keeps you awake at night, or at least the thinking and planning parts?
17. Can you remember a life or entrepreneurial challenge that seemed bigger than life- how did you process- or work through it
18. Do you remember a time when you had to take a risk. How was that and how did you talk yourself through it?
19. Do you remember anyone in your growing up years who you could now look back and say that he or she was an entrepreneur? Why did you think so? Tell me about them? What distinguished them from others who you felt weren't entrepreneurial?
20. Can you think of times in your life when your 'entrepreneurial spirit' created a sense of unease in your spouse or partner?

21. If someone were to ask you what is going on in your mind? What would you say?
22. What/who has been the most powerful influence in your life?
23. What are some of your regrets?
24. Has there been a time when you failed at something and how did you handle it?
25. Every good idea has something wrong with it- when some can only see what is wrong with it and you can see the potential, how do you deal with that?
26. What do you think about as you are considering making a risky or unpopular decision?
27. In the context where no one agrees with you, how do you reconcile that in your mind?
28. How can I help people understand entrepreneurs better?
29. How do we better encourage/nurture entrepreneurs?
30. How do we build the capacity for entrepreneurship? How do we foster that?
31. How do we work creative ideas and thoughts in the contexts and structures we have got?
32. So if you were to do it all over again, what would you do differently?
33. What would you foster?
34. How did you learn to be entrepreneurial?
35. How much of entrepreneurship is transferable to others?
36. How have you been encouraged?
37. How would we foster this in children?
38. Do you have family members who are entrepreneurial? Children? Parents?

## ***Appendix E***

Letter of Consent for release of Transcripts



This research project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Saskatchewan Advisory Board on Ethics in Behavioural Science Research on  
June 12, 2012

### LETTER OF CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

Thank you for participating in this research study: The Mind of An Entrepreneur: Researching Lived Experience. I am forwarding the transcribed recordings of our interviews for your perusal and your release of this confidential information for use in my research. Our conversation has been an opportunity to dig deeper into meanings, and understandings of entrepreneurial thinking. In order to protect the interest of each person taking part in this study, I will adhere to the procedural and ethical guidelines below:

1. Reading and rechecking the transcripts for accuracy of information and intent. You are welcome to edit the transcript to clarify what you intended to mean and I invite you to make comments in your own words or delete information that you do not want to be quoted in the study.
2. Interpretations of data collected from this study. I will use finding from these interviews in my dissertation and in scholarly publications and presentation. Throughout the study, your participation has remained and will remain confidential. Your name will not be used in my dissertation or in any presentation, if you do not wish to have it used.
3. In accordance with the University of Saskatchewan Guidelines on Behavioural Ethics, the recordings and transcripts made during the study will be kept with my advisor, Dr. Keith Walker (966-7623), in a locked file until the study is finished. After completion of the study, the tapes and other data will be securely kept for five years at the University of Saskatchewan and then destroyed.
4. Participation in the study is voluntary, and you may withdraw participation at any time without penalty. If this happens, the recordings and interview data will be destroyed.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand the guidelines above and agree to release the revised transcripts to the researcher.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give you permission to use my name associated with the interview data that I provided for this research. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (initial please)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

As a participant in this study, you may contact myself, Cyndie Baum, Ph.D. Candidate, College of Graduate Studies and Research, University of Saskatchewan at [cyndie.baum@usask.ca](mailto:cyndie.baum@usask.ca) (403 874-8717, cell), Dr. Keith Walker, academic advisor, Department of Educational Administration and Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of Saskatchewan (1-306-966-7623), or Research Services, University of Saskatchewan, (306) 966-8576 Fax: (306) 966-8597 [research.services@usask.ca](mailto:research.services@usask.ca) at anytime if you have questions about the study.

## ***Appendix F***

### Robert Chipman's 12 Precepts

(RM43:00-45:00)

1. The winners in this world are those that give,
2. You can't be too generous in praise of others,
3. Stay the course- Be circumspect, the grass on the other side is not always greener,
4. We can't reclaim the past, we can't, so focus on a better tomorrow,
5. Giving the benefit of a doubt is generally the best decision, because the people who make the most decisions do so with information that isn't available to all of us,
6. Good health requires a commitment,
7. Business success involves considered risk, but there's got to be risk- there's got to be risk.
8. Thoughtfulness is a core quality for personal success,
9. Be decisive. Procrastination is bad habit.
10. It is easy to criticize be careful.
11. The daily pursuit of knowledge is important and finally
12. A warm smile is a valuable personal attribute

## ***Appendix G***

Gordon Rumpel Tribute

### Gordon Rumpel's Tribute

Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.  
Words that soak into your ears are whispered, not yelled.  
Forgive your enemies. It messes up their head.  
You cannot unsay a cruel word.  
Every path has a few puddles.  
The best sermons are lived, not preached.  
Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.  
If you find yourself in a hole,  
the first thing to do is stop diggin'.  
Always drink upstream from the herd.  
Lettin' the cat out of the bag is  
a whole lot easier than puttin' it back in.  
If you get to thinkin' you're a person of influence,  
try orderin' somebody else's dog around.  
Live Simply, Love Generously.  
Care Deeply. Speak kindly, Leave the rest to God.  
Unknown

## **Picture Album**

The following section contains pictures of the interviewees who allowed me to include them in this study. For me, this is somewhat of an emotional ending. This year I had to say good-bye to two amazing participants. Gordon Rumpel and Robert Chipman gave up their fight with cancer. I am so glad that I got a chance to hear their story. But I am also profoundly grateful each person in my study. I had an opportunity to get to know them in a way that only comes when one shares their journey with someone. I have grown in ways that reach far beyond the topic of this study. We are no longer strangers! Thank you for enriching my life through your stories!

1. Richard Gauthier and myself



2. Al MacPhee and myself



3. Luc Duval and myself



4. Anne-Frederic Duval and myself





5. Robert Chipman (RM) and myself



6. Gordon Rumpel and myself



7. The Honorable Doug Horner and myself



8. John Robinson and myself



9. Cathy Bennett

